

300 and Fellini-Satyricon: Film Theory in the Tertiary Classroom

Leanne Glass
The University of Newcastle
Newcastle, Callaghan, Australia
leanne.glass@uon.edu.au

**Volume 1, Issue 1:
Contemporary Popular
Culture**

Table of Contents

Editorial

Popular Culture Studies

Scholarship into the Future

Lynne Chapman King and Anna Cohen-Miller

Guest Editorial

"ναός ἀνθρωπίνου βίου κέντρον":
Popular Culture as a Pedagogical Lens on Greek Roman Antiquity

Kristen Day and Benjamin Hahn

Part I: Epic Reconsiderations

Wounds That Will Not Heal: Herodion and Innocence in Shakespeare and the *Iliad*

Carl A. Rubino

Or Homer, Here Art Thou?: Teaching the *Iliad* and the *Odysssey* through Popular Culture

Malory Young

The Odyssey and Its Odyssey in Contemporary Texts: Re-Visions in Star Trek, The Time Traveller's Wife, and the *Panopticon*

Mary Economou Bailey Green

Abstract: Pedagogical practices in Reception-based courses on ancient Greece and Rome in film often focus on an individual film's connections to its historical themes and meta-narrative. In contrast, courses based on Film Studies often focus pedagogical discourses on filmic techniques or the filmmaking process *per se*. Regularly, the two approaches remain discrete and discipline-based.

In view of this disjunction in teaching approaches and foci, the intention of this paper is to explore the benefits of film theory, including its consideration of film technique, within Classical Reception courses. Therefore, the suggestion offered herein is that more emphasis on the pedagogies of Film Studies would provide an enhanced and richer understanding of cinematic interpretations and possibilities for the student of Classical Reception and film.

To illustrate this pedagogical suggestion, a discussion of mainstream Hollywood-style cinema as depicted by Zack Snyder's *300* (2007), in contrast to the independent auteur-driven film, Federico Fellini's *Fellini-Satyricon* (1969), is the focus. These two films provide the tertiary instructor with a variety of theoretical and technical considerations that are important learning components in a course on ancient Greece and Rome and which are not always available in the more popularized and more commercially oriented Hollywood-style cinema.

Additionally, focusing on two different styles of filmmaking and including an acknowledgment of each filmmaker's aesthetic enables the tertiary instructor to explore other fields of enquiry that require a broader cultural literacy such as class, race, gender, and sexuality. This, in turn, allows for a more informed interaction on specific cultural themes between the ancient and modern worlds as interpreted by the filmmakers.

I. Introduction

Films based on ancient Greece and Rome may be generally divided into two categories: popular entertainment such as William Wyler's *Ben-Hur* (1959), Stanley Kubrick's *Spartan's Story* (1960) and Ridley Scott's *Gladiator* (2000), and art-house films, such as Jean Luc Godard's *Le Mepris* (Contempt) (1963) and Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Medea* (1969). In Classical Reception courses, both concepts of filmmaking are usually treated but are often discussed in relation to subject matter only and their connections and disconnections to antiquity. Therefore, as a means of considering the inclusion of both styles in the classroom and as a way of underlining the importance of film theory for students, a discussion of Zack Snyder's *300* (2007) and Federico Fellini's *Fellini-Satyricon* (1969) forms the basis of this article.

This article introduces two main benefits: firstly, teaching these films opens dialogue on the role of the auteur, which is one of the most debatable issues in film and media studies, with the generally accepted view that a film should not be attributed to one person but is a collaborative effort. Additionally, these two films demonstrate to students the validity of both mainstream cinema and auteur-based or art-house films, leading to discussions of the ways in which a filmmaker's input should be evaluated on an individual or artistic basis.

While Snyder's *300* objectively replicates the graphic novel on which it is based to meet popular and commercial expectations, *Fellini-Satyricon*, as a film that is indelicately stamped with Fellini's name, is the result of Fellini's unique interpretation of the ancient Roman world and does not meet the expectations of the commercial, instructed reader. Despite the differences in production and style, ultimately, both films offer exciting and artistic readings of ancient Greece and Rome and are equally valuable contributors to tertiary courses.

Additionally, acknowledging Snyder and Fellini's disparate modes of filmmaking opens broader cultural themes within each film's narrative, including class, race, gender, and sexuality. This permits a more thorough understanding of each filmmaker's aesthetic interpretation of the ancient world and the ways their incorporation of different themes connect with modern concerns, which is a key component of Classical Reception Studies.

II. Pedagogical and Scholarly Approaches to Ancient Greece and Rome in Film

Present teaching focuses on the historical film's interpretation from social, cultural, mythic and/or factual bases, but little emphasis is placed upon the diversity of its cinematic genres that, for instance, can include mainstream, Hollywood-style cinema, art-house, and even theatrical re-enactments. To exemplify this wide range, in his early study of Greek tragedy into film, Kenneth MacKinnon classified this ancient theatrical field into four cinematic categories: "theatrical, realistic and filmic modes, and meta-tragedy" (19: 30). This shows that even within one historically-based dramatic or literary field, cinematic interpretations can vary greatly and are reflections of different styles in filmmaking. The effect of these varying techniques as outlined differs from readings of one ancient source, but rather provides an alternative interpretation of the same source. For instance, in *Classics on Screen: Ancient Greece and Rome on Film*, Astash Babshard and Kim Shahabuddin state: "One should be wary of the fallacy of 'auteurism,' the tendency to attribute every aspect back to the director" (9). Additionally, in the innovative and highly influential *Projecting the Past: Ancient Rome, Cinema and History*, Maria Wyke asserts that a film's production crew act as a microcosm of society, thereby injecting their socio-historical voice into the meta-narrative of the film (24). Both texts, therefore, question the reality of the auteur and, in order for students to interact with these scholarly positions, indeed to question them, they should ideally be aware of alternative arguments as well as theoretical perspectives with which to engage with such texts.

In fact, a formulation of authorship in film is re-emerging in new interpretive approaches that take into consideration the filmmaker's historical and cultural backgrounds in relation to the film under consideration (Ford 104), a development which parallels an approach in historicalism (Villarejo 58). This perspective introduces an instructor to provide students with a solid foundation to differentiate between various cinematic genres and filmmaking techniques. This then extends to the benefits of providing students with important cinematic terminology.

The issues raised so far are important in view of the scholarly texts available to students enrolled in such courses. In fact, the study of film that is similarly equipped with comic book themes is a relatively new genre in *Classics on Screen: Ancient Greece and Rome on Film*. Astash Babshard and Kim Shahabuddin state: "One should be wary of the fallacy of 'auteurism,' the tendency to attribute every aspect back to the director" (9). Additionally, in the innovative and highly influential *Projecting the Past: Ancient Rome, Cinema and History*, Maria Wyke asserts that a film's production crew act as a microcosm of society, thereby injecting their socio-historical voice into the meta-narrative of the film (24). Both texts, therefore, question the reality of the auteur and, in order for students to interact with these scholarly positions, indeed to question them, they should ideally be aware of alternative arguments as well as theoretical perspectives with which to engage with such texts.

Adopting this individual and logical approach in Classical Reception Studies creates the foundation for a more informed methodological process that sets the distinction between a mainstream or auteur-inspired film, allows for specific sub-genre classifications such as epic, fantasy, or art-house; and, in turn, takes into consideration the manner in which any of these aspects feed into the film's narratives. This approach naturally melds with

classical reception studies, which is a field that is similarly equipped with comic book themes. An instructor can use popular themes and technological advances, such as Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) or 3D special effects. Nor are they bound to the tenets of one particular genre or filmmaking practice, which can result in blurring the lines between, for instance, mass audience appeal and art-house. Filmmaking is a constantly changing creative process and, as such, studies in Classical Reception need to recognize and adapt, where appropriate, to its changing edicts.

To clarify some of the advantages of an individual approach towards filmmaking, a brief exploration of Snyder's *300* followed by Fellini's *Fellini-Satyricon* which, on the surface, are two seemingly disparate films, will provide a basic model for further consideration in this developing academic field.

III. Snyder – The Comic Book and the Blockbuster

The plot of Snyder's *300*, involving an elite group of Spartans who, led by King Leonidas, faces King Xerxes' Persian army in the narrow pass at Thermopylae in 480 BCE for the protection of all Greece, is a loose translation of historical accounts. Yet its actual origins as a comic book series and later graphic novel by Frank Miller positions *300* within several sub-genres: literary, historical, epic, and fantasy.

As a young boy, Miller was inspired by the story of the battle at Thermopylae after watching Rudolph Maté's *The 300 Spartans* (1962), a story that remained with him until its recreation as a work of both history and fiction in his comic book series. This fictional aspect can be seen, for instance, in *300*'s emphasis on larger-than-life characters (almost supernatural in their representation), extreme dramatic overtures, and a specific focus on strong, powerful messages such as honor, duty, and glory, which are features of the comic book genre and are particularly evident in the film's historical or military rhetoric. These multi-faceted layers of *300*'s historical and literary conception along with its modern American sub-textual ideologies highlight its ability to appeal to a wide audience. However, *300*'s most significant attraction, as exemplified by Miller's boyhood memories, is its inspiring storyline that is based on actual events. The spectator can connect with this film, at its basic historical level, as an example of human courage and honor. Regardless of the comic book's supernatural elements, which are then transformed into Snyder's cinematic interpretation, the three hundred Spartans are a group of extra-ordinary men facing the might of the Persian army.

Nevertheless, the comic book's sub-textual nuances regarding modern American beliefs are noticeable and, suggestively, deliberate. Miller's outspoken political views are, at the very least, patriotic and the comic book's release in 1998 occurred shortly after tensions between the United States and Iran, formerly Persia, had eased. This significant fact cannot be overlooked when considering the film's release in 2007. On September 11th, 2001, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in New York City, and the September 11th, 2001, New York, killing thousands. The shock, anger, and worldwide reverberations of the attacks, known as 9/11, continue to the present day and are a reflection on the timing of *300*'s cinematic release, occurring after the initial alarm had subsided but still remained vivid in people's memories. In response to 9/11, Miller stated "Patriotism, in my 300, isn't some sentimental, old conceit. It's self preservation" ("That Old Piece of Cloth"). This theme is evident in *300*'s basic storyline, yet, regardless of Snyder's consistent disclaimer that he did not make the film as a comment on current tensions (a view that was also supported by Warner Bros.), Miller's overt views and influence cannot be ignored.

This may seem an irrelevant factor when considering the differences between mainstream cinema and the role of the auteur; however, the popularity of Miller's comic books such as *Sin City* and *Batman: The Dark Knight and Dark Knight Returns*, which were later made into high-grossing films, coupled with his own forays into filmmaking through *300* (2007), *Red Tails* (2006), *RoboCop* (2014), *RoboCop 2* (2013), and *Justice League* (2017), further underline his influence on the culture and then on others on the cult of the celebrity and filmmaking industry. Miller's popularity and influence in an emerging billion-dollar filmmaking sub-culture that focusses on bringing the influence of comic book genre to the screen would almost certainly have piqued Snyder's interest.

As a filmmaker who had previously made a remake of the comic-based *Dawn of the Dead* (2004) and was a self-proclaimed fan of Frank Miller (Dillullo 7), Snyder's aim of "faithfully translating Miller's script," bodily depictions of war exactly from the page to the screen" (Dillullo 7) reflects his admiration for Miller and confidence in *300*'s storyline and high-grossing potential. Consequently, *300*'s reach into several sub-genres, the popularity of Miller, and an inspiring storyline suggested its potentiality for mass-market appeal.

An exciting story and commercial popularity are common features of mainstream, classical Hollywood cinema, but a distinction needed to be made between this and the studio system already in place. Unlike the former studio system that operated from approximately 1920 until circa 1950 that, under the control of the major Hollywood studios such as MGM and Warner Bros., oversaw all facets of a film's production, distribution, and exhibition (Nelmes 499), mainstream, current classical Hollywood cinema offers a more flexible approach. As an example instead, mainstream cinema involves a feature-length movie with a linear narrative that is aimed at the mass market as a potentially high-grossing form of entertainment. This means that this style of film is not restricted to Hollywood but all films that pertain to this model. Thus, to be more specific, the additional designation of a classical Hollywood style defines the linear narrative further to include cause and effect, continuity editing, a *mise-en-scène* (the composition of a shot, including everything that appears before the camera) that alludes to a sense of cinematic realism, the inclusion of cultural stereotypes that plausibly meet social or genre criteria, and a main protagonist(s) who has clear-cut goals and problems (Villarejo 153). This overall emphasis on almost invisible production methods to make the visual perspective of the film, its plot, and its characters seem as if they are real and to specifically meet social and cultural expectations defines the narrative and cinematic approach adopted for *300*. To understand the manner in which some of these descriptions operate within film, let us briefly consider the actual differences between Miller's novel and *300*'s cinematic interpretation within film, let us briefly consider the actual differences between Miller's novel and *300*'s cinematic interpretation.

One of the clearest examples of the differences between Miller's novel and Snyder's interpretation is the film's emphasis on *mise-en-scène* that offers no comparison with comic book themes. Any attempt to replicate the comic book on this level would offer a disjointed narrative and a complete lack of realism; however, Snyder's familiar use of slow motion techniques, such as in the fight scenes between the Greeks and Persians, accentuates the brutality of war and pays homage to the individual frames of Miller's work, which are not evenly divided but vary in size to emphasize certain significant events. The closeness in their visual appearance with Miller's novel illuminates his artistry and beauty interest and the Spartan's physiques during battle, while the overall effect intensifies the action, encouraging viewer and expert's excitement.

Nevertheless, although Snyder does replicate Miller's novel by closely adhering to the main characters, visual impact, and thread of the story – in fact, many images and script lines can directly be cross-referenced to the novel – Miller incorporated historically-based, social, and cultural depictions of the Spartans that may have not been palatable for contemporary audiences. For example, in his *300* film depicts the Spartans combining their hair and growing beards before the battle (cf. "How to" of Herodotus 7:209), an instance which is omitted by Snyder. Similarly, Snyder added scenes, which do not detract from the original drama, but rather act as embellishments to emphasize specific elements or add to the film's emotive force. For instance, the additional scene featuring the "Tree of the Dead" depicts a lifeless tree in a scorched landscape covered with the naked, dead bodies of citizens from a village. An orphaned, dying child nearby confirms that the destruction of the village is a direct result of the Persian invasion. In its comic book origins and simultaneously emphasizes Persia's wish to annihilate the Persians and their consorts, senators and generals, the military battles, and grand triumphal marches. This visually and narratively re-affirms the importance of the Spartans' mission.

The Persians' razing of the village and the lone, orphaned child are also symbolic indicators of the susceptibility of Sparta and, consequently, the destruction of the family unit. Snyder places more emphasis on familial ties than Miller's *300* does. This is evident in the film's depiction of the Spartans' captain and his son, and more significantly, in the close family relationship between Leonidas, Gorgo, and their son, Pleistarchus. Thus, the film illustrates the effects of war on families, which is a theme that would have resonated with many Americans displaced by tensions between the United States and the Middle East. This is offset by Snyder's extension of Gorgo's role, which takes her from her previously limited role as Leonidas' devoted wife to a woman who faces the Spartan role to rally support for her husband, which reflects the woman's role speaking out in a masculine society. Gorgo's extended role also adds a strong female element to an otherwise masculine-based story that may have alienated female viewers. Yet like Sparta and the family unit, Gorgo is also vulnerable.

Thus, as an additional sub-plot, Gorgo's exceptional beauty and delicate body are also forms of physical weakness susceptible to attack. Her deal with the councillor Theron ultimately leads to her rape, yet like her husband, the hero Leonidas, Gorgo emerges as the principle heroine (in) gaining support from the king and her army in reclaiming Thermopylae. The death of Gorgo's hands, which mimics the violence associated with her rape, inspires the film's continuing sense of honor, courage, and moral righteousness that similarly echoes the Spartans' deeds in battle. By adopting these additional descriptive details to Miller's narrative, Snyder emphasizes the two sides of war: the glory of battle and the vulnerability (and strength) of those who defend.

Additionally, the film's physical embodiment of Miller's comic book heroes and villains meets mass social and cultural expectations that associate the heroes with beauty and the villains as ugly. Consequently, the three hundred Spartans' physiques are lean, muscular, and attractive, which are attributes that generally find their inspiration in historical accounts of the Spartans' strict diet and training regimes. Their trunks and red capes mimic familiar comic book superheroes and all-round good guys, and with strong morals, courage, and strength, they offer extreme versions of perfect warriors and all-round good guys. Xerxes' wealthy and statuesque presence similarly reflects the comic book villain, as does the Persian's arch enemy, Theron, who must be worthy, if not superior, to his appearance, which (historically) symbolizes every extravagance the Spartans opposed, means that for them he is repulsive. This can be sensed in the hero Leonidas' barely concealed aversion and disrespect to Xerxes and his demands.

In contrast, the irreversibly disfigured characters, who are mainly of Spartan origin, such as Epialtes and the ephors, are revealed as traitorous or incompatible with the Spartan cause (with the exception of Theron), and are alienated from society. Their disfigurement is offset by examples from Xerxes' super-sized army, such as the massive rhinoceros and elephants, their inclusion with Saws for arms, and the chained giant with sharpened teeth and characteristics of a rabid dog. Their inclusion in Snyder's film connects with its larger-than-life comic book origins and emphasizes the Spartans' heroic ability to counter these monstrous creatures with their human skill and fighting tactics. Of particular note, however, is an additional scene that features Xerxes' "harem" in his final moments as he smashes the film. This is a reference to the comic book's "harem" and softens the impact of his death. This aspect, which is omitted by Snyder, suggests the brutality and immorality of Xerxes' reign. For instance, many of the women appear to have been deliberately disfigured either through amputation or scalding and are overtly sexually immoral and licentious. This treatment of the female form is a depiction that reflects their close association with evil and results in destroying the beautiful and manufactured image of Xerxes.

As a film based on Miller's comic book series, then, Snyder's *300* pays deference to the medium in several ways: the use of Miller's loose interpretation of real events, the semi-historical and semi-comic book characters; and the visual imagery and aesthetics (particularly its *mise-en-scène*). Additionally, the majority of the film was shot in a studio with a vast production crew and a special effects team going to great lengths to achieve the visual imagery of Miller's *300*, imagery that fits the perceived quintessential model of ancient Greece. Snyder's adaptation does reflect some variations of mainstream, classical Hollywood-style cinema but, instead of stepping outside the confines of this model of film, Snyder re-affirms the film as a form of popular, commercial entertainment. Snyder's approach encourages identification with ancient Greece and the story of *300* from a mass-market contemporary perspective that can be appreciated from his use of popular, cultural signifiers such as good versus evil, recognition bonds, family values, the hero, and slow motion techniques, all of which acknowledge Western society's emblematic cultural stereotypes and expectation for the spectacular visual imagery of ancient battle. In this sense, Snyder's *300* is formulaic in its conception and represents a mainstream, classical Hollywood-style film.

IV. *Fellini-Satyricon* – the Auteur and Art-house Cinema

Since its inception in 1954 the idea of the auteur or auteur theory has provoked controversial responses from film critics. The concept and term were the result of the French film critic François Truffaut's essay "Une Certaine Tendance du cinéma française" ("A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema"), which was published in the French film magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma*. Truffaut's essay, which criticized some of the most famous French directors and their screenwriters of the day for being too reliant on literature rather than art, thereby heralding the auteur's role in cinema. Truffaut advocated the need for a film's director to creatively overrule any other person involved in the film's production; in other words, he believed a film should represent a personal form of cinematic expression. Juan Carlos A. González, a contributor to the film journal *Senses of Cinema*, explains Truffaut's doctrine: "As a critic, it would permit the development of his theory of authorship, the *politique des auteurs*," a concept that distinguished the profound knowledge of the film director and put forth an undefeatable defence of his style – marked by a high degree of artistic autonomy – and his conception of cinema, unconcerned if some of his films did not reach an expected quality" (cf. "Using Film Criticism Like a Sword").

Truffaut's use of the role of the auteur in film was popularized by the American film critic Andrew Sarris in his essay "Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962." Sarris acknowledged that there is no definition of the auteur in his essay "English Language." In fact, the auteur theory itself is a pattern theory. Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was the American film critic Pauline Kael, whose article "Circles and Squares" lambasted Sarris' defining principles, questioning their theoretical place within filmmaking (12-26). Kael heralded an increasing trend away from the role of the auteur that has continued through the present day. Film-makers are now more likely to be recognized for their work as auteurs, rather than for their role in the film's production. This is evident in the work of the auteur Paul Watson, who has always done so, however, to provide a series of loose parameters for the role of the auteur in film: "The three premises of the auteur theory may be visualized as three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle, personal style; and the inner circle, interior meaning. The corresponding roles of the director may be designated as those of a technician, a stylist, and an auteur" (563). Thus, taking these accounts into consideration, auteur theory is broadly indicative of the individual style of the director, permeating the *mise-en-scène* of a film with his or her own indelible mark or signature and is a continuous creative process with no definable technique or structure.

Nevertheless, one of the first outspoken opponents against the auteur theory was