



## Interview with the Vampire (1994) 10.16.20

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- ❖ [“Jordan, Neil” by Caroline Zucker from \*Senses of Cinema\*](#) --- Great Director Profile of Neil Jordan from *Senses of Cinema*.
- ❖ [“Unwrapping the Homoeroticism of ‘Interview with the Vampire’” from \*Attitude\*](#) --- Here’s the article Maxx mentioned at the beginning of the track.
- ❖ [The Vampyre by John Polidori](#) --- Here’s a link to the short story!
- ❖ [Neil Jordan by Maria Pramaggiore](#) --- This book, like the rest of the *Contemporary Filmmakers Series* in which it’s published, is by no means an exhaustive look at Neil Jordan’s career, but that doesn’t stop it from being a robust entry into critical examination of his work. Pramaggiore considers the gothic tradition a fundamental part of Jordan’s entire career, and her focus on the gothic in Jordan’s films makes this book a fun read. The chapter on *Company of Wolves* (1984) and *Interview with the Vampire* is wonderful.
- ❖ [Mythologies by Roland Barthes](#) --- We relied on the Richard Brooks translation for this episode – and we have no idea whether this translation is considered accurate or quality – but Barthes’ intelligence shines through regardless. *Mythologies* is a classic for a reason, insightful and entertaining in equal measure. Highly recommended. We’ll include the quoted passages below:

### ➤ The Harcourt Actor

- “The Harcourt actor is a god; gods never *do* anything, they’re caught *in repose*” (15)
- “Leaving the ‘stage’ for ‘town,’ the Harcourt actor in no way abandons ‘dreams’ for ‘reality.’ Quite the contrary: onstage, well built, bony, fleshy, thick-skinned under the greasepaint; in town, smooth, sleek, pumiced by the grace, and aerated by the Harcourt Studios glow. Onstage, sometimes old, at least indicating some age or other; in town, eternally young, fixed forever at beauty’s apogee. Onstage, betrayed by the materiality of a voice as muscle-bound as a dancer’s overdeveloped calves; in town, ideally silent, i.e., mysterious, filled with the deep secrecy attributed to all beauty that does not speak. Onstage, lastly, necessarily engaged in trivial or heroic, in any case effective gestures; in town, reduced to a face purged of all movement” (15-16)
- “The Harcourt iconography sublimates the actor’s materiality and prolongs a necessarily trivial ‘scene’ (since it functions) by means of an inert and consequently ideal ‘town.’ A paradoxical status, it is this scene which is reality here; ‘town’ is myth, dream, wonderland. The actor, rid of the too-fleshly envelope of his profession, rejoins his ritual essence as hero, as human archetype, located at the limit of other

men's physical norms. Here the face is a fictional object; its impassivity, its divine dough, suspends everyday truth and bestows the confusion, the pleasure, and ultimately the security of a higher truth" (17)

➤ **Garbo's Face**

- "Garbo produced a sort of Platonic idea of the human creature, which accounts for her own face being virtually sexless without being at all 'dubious.' It's true that the film (Queen Christina is alternately a woman and a young cavalier) lends itself to this indeterminacy; but Garbo does not give any kind of travestied performance; she is always herself, frankly revealing under her crown or her wide-brimmed felt hats the same countenance of snow and solitude. Her nickname, Divine, probably intended to suggest less a superlative state of beauty than the essence of her corporeal person, descended from heaven where things are formed and finished with the greatest clarity. She herself knew this: How many actresses have consented to let the crowd watch the disturbing maturation of their beauty? Not Garbo: the Essence must not degrade, her visage could never have any other reality than that of its intellectual perfection, even more than its plastic one. The Essence has gradually dimmed, progressively veiled by dark glasses, hooded caps, and various exiles; but it has never altered" (74)

❖ *Men, Women, and Chainsaws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film* by Carol J. Clover —

This is a seminal book in academic criticism on the horror genre. As always, we highly recommend any of our listeners with an interest in learning about horror movies read this book. I don't think Clover discusses *Interview with the Vampire* specifically, but I think her work remains insightful into ways the film plays with gender; specifically, it's worth examining the film, and Claudia specifically, in light of Clover's observation that (in possession narratives) the male character's emotional journey is often sublimated/displaced onto the body of the female characters.

❖ *Buster Keaton's Sherlock Jr.* Edited by Andrew Horton — We're linking this resource we used in our *Sherlock Jr.* (1924) episode because it's such a fantastic introduction to the concept of homosocial bonds, which we bring up ad nauseum on the show. We didn't quote from it during this episode, but "The Detective and the Fool: Or, The Mystery of Manhood in *Sherlock Jr.*" by Kathleen Rowe Karlyn is the specific essay discussing homosocial bonds, and we'll provide some passages below:

- "The gendered relationships of the Holmesian universe might more accurately be explained... by the structure of desire Eve Sedgwick has described as homosocial, a term used in history and the social sciences to describe social bonds among people of the same sex...the real play of desire is often not male to female, but male to male. This desire may or may not be overtly sexual but it does involve eros of another kind – the drive to identify with and emulate an admired other... Yet those bonds exist within a logic of sameness rather than difference, a logic that, as Sedgwick explains, functions historically and politically as a kind of 'social glue' that fosters the maintenance and transferred of power in patriarchal society. Homosociality encompasses 'male friendship, mentorship, entitlement, rivalry, and heter – and homosexuality,'" attachments that link men together

along a continuum of desire between homosocial and homosexual. This structure allows for hierarchy without difference, and it explains the relationships between men so familiar in Western literature and culture, beginning with the Socratic dialogues and including not only Watson's relationship with Holmes but the boy's with his fictional ideal" (106-07). [*Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire by Eve Sedgwick*]