

Title: Gendered Viewing Strategies: A Critique of Holocaust-related Films that Eroticize, Monsterize and Fetishize the Female Body.

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Introduction

In her chapter '*Patriarchy, Objectification, and Violence against Women in Schindler's List and Angry Harvest*', Shapiro considers Schweickart's essay on 'Reading Ourselves: Toward a Feminist Theory of Reading.'¹ In this essay Schweickart talks about androcentric reading strategies. This approach identifies texts that reproduce gender hierarchies, ascribing agency to men while objectifying and immasculating women. Drawing upon this work, Shapiro applies this to two Holocaust-related films: Spielberg's (1993) *Schindler's List* and Holland's (1985) *Angry Harvest*. In her analysis of these films, Shapiro comes to the conclusion that in *Schindler's List* the feminization of the objectified female 'Other' is taken for granted and therefore rendered invisible.² This is in contrast to *Angry Harvest* – where the audience is asked to consider how violence is caused by gender inequalities and the objectification of women.

This process of objectification and immasculation is illustrated in a sequence in *Schindler's List*, where the Commandant of the Plaszow Forced Labor Camp, Amon Goeth (as played by Ralph Fiennes), bare-chested, aims his rifle at his naked Jewish mistress whilst she lies on his bed. Horowitz suggests that this scene equates masculinity with killing. The rifle here represents the penis. Further, as Goeth does not discharge his rifle and shoot her, but rather he moves past and urinates, this "...sequence equalizes the acts of shooting, fornication, and urination." It "asserts an equivalence among Jews, his mistress, and the toilet, all repositories of Nazi effluvia." Here we witness "[a]trocities...enacted with semen, urine, or gunshot."³ It is possible to view this equation as a critique of Nazism, patriarchy and male sexuality. Ultimately, however, Horowitz finds this critique unpersuasive as the film "...simply absorbs and reproduces these images of women and violence, without knowingly interrupting or interrogating their production."⁴ Similarly, referring to a later scene in which Goeth sadistically beats his Jewish maid Helen, Picart and Frank argue that this "seduction-turned-torture scene does not, ironically, destabilize Goeth's hypermasculinized depiction of masculinity (set against his hyperfeminized other, Helen) but simply replicates it."⁵ As they suggest, the position of the camera tells us

exactly whose point of view is privileged.

Our interpretive strategy here is to interrogate this privileged gaze upon the eroticized *and* brutalized female body within the wider ‘Nazisploitation’ genre and associated ‘filone.’ The films to be discussed are *Love Camp 7* (1967 dir RL Frost), *The Night Porter* (1974 dir Liliana Cavani), *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS*, (1975 dir Don Edmonds) and *Schindler's List* (1994, dir Steven Spielberg). These films can be placed within three broad categories: Nazisploitation/sexploitation cinema of the 1960s and 1970s (*Love Camp 7* and *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS*); Italian art-house cinema of the same period (*The Night Porter*) and mainstream cinema (*Schindler's List*).⁶ Magilow identifies Nazisploitation cinema as “... sexually perverted, calculating and sadistic.”⁷ *Love Camp 7* was the first film to take the ‘women-in-prison’ genre and marry it to the ‘roughie’ sex film, whilst wrapping the whole within a potent veneer of Nazi iconography. The later Italian films of the 1970s followed on from Luchino Visconti’s (1969) *The Damned*. They were part of a ‘filone’ that followed Visconti’s exploration of an aristocratic German family’s descent set against the backdrop of the rise of National Socialism. The term filone refers to a series of cheaply made ‘copycat’ pictures that were rushed into production. They typically shared plots, sets and actors. The Nazisploitation filone were set in prisoner-of-war camps, Nazi-run bordellos or a combination of the two. They often incorporated medical experimentation and forced prostitution, and tended to conclude with a third act prisoner revolt. As Hake states, “all sexual acts are performed under conditions of inequality and coercion.” These lead to scenes “...of horror, violence, torture and death.”⁸ *Love Camp 7* pre-dated the Italian skein of the genre, but the Canadian production *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS* can be considered an English language response. It too drew upon the “carnavalesque mixture of historical settings [...] sadistic violence, moments of repulsion and fetishistic use of costumes and simulated sex”⁹ of its Italian exploitation contemporaries. At its most broad, exploitation cinema delivers seemingly guilt-free spectacles of suffering and humiliation in which the female body is fetishized and used as a vessel upon which sadistic violence is exercised.¹⁰ What we see in Cavani’s (1974) *The Night Porter* is a confusion of these elements. Cavani came from a documentary making background, producing work on – amongst other subjects – Nazi Germany for the Italian state-owned television network RAI. Her feature films can be placed alongside the politically-charged work of Pasolini as an attempt to capture the post-68 ‘moment’. *Salò* (1975, P Pasolini) and

The Night Porter attempt to deal with a particular European history of fascist violence. In Marrone's forceful phrasing, Cavani "denounces the human debacle of hierarchical orders of power."¹¹ Yet, as Hake puts it, it is worth considering the extent to which art films "profited from the visceral pleasures" of the 'low' culture exploitation films.¹² Indeed, it is the central sexual relationship of the *The Night Porter* that allows Cavani to explore questions of guilt, memory and trauma. And, in *Schindler's List*, there is a further blurring of boundaries and form. Spielberg's 1993 film, an adaptation of the historical fiction novel *Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally, was a major studio release that grossed \$321 million internationally. Yet, in parts, it employs the leering gaze familiar from sexploitation, but which is then allied with a stark cinematography that echoes a documentary filmmaking tradition. It was this blurring of boundaries that informed our film selection here. It is an attempt to capture the 'high and low and in between' put forward by Betz. There are rhizomic threads running through this selection. Strands that cross throughout the low-budget Nazisploitation filone spill out and into the art house and mainstream. The genre boundaries become fluid. This has informed the films that we have chosen to discuss here. Our task in this paper is to outline the viewing strategies used to unpack the depictions of sexual violence in each of these examples. We aim to extend Shapiro's analysis of *Schindler's List* by reading backwards and locating it within the broader Nazisploitation genre. We can trace the ways in which the voyeuristic look upon brutalized female bodies in *Schindler's List* finds form in *Love Camp 7*, *Ilsa* and *The Night Porter*. In so doing, we can reframe Schweickart's reading strategies.

Aim of the Article.

We apply Schweickart's thesis to those viewing strategies employed when watching Holocaust-related films that eroticize the female body. This piece extends Shapiro's analysis and applies Schweickart's thesis to the aforementioned Holocaust films that feature rape and sexual violence. The categories of analysis are: the eroticization of fascism,¹³ voyeurism and the male gaze,¹⁴ as well as sadomasochism, referred to here as S/M.¹⁵ Responding to Brown's suggestion in this journal, that more research needs to be undertaken on how female perpetrators are judged and represented in Holocaust-related films,¹⁶ and using the categories of analysis listed above, we examine representations of *both* the female Nazi *and* the female Jewish victim.

In a similar vein to Picart and Frank, we consider the audience response to such films, their interpretive strategies. Following Meiri, “[c]inematic visualization is linked here to the act of seeing and looking (signifying cinematic representation), which in turn is connected with recognizing, identifying, knowing, acknowledging and accepting.”¹⁷ We analyze such visualization from a feminist perspective, placing gender at the forefront of the analysis. As Waterhouse-Watson and Brown argue, gender rarely features as a major concern in Holocaust films across Europe and in the US.¹⁸ Based on broader gendered analyses of the Holocaust, Banwell and others have written about the unique experiences of women during the Holocaust.¹⁹ This research demonstrates that:

[W]omen were vulnerable to abuse in a number of ways: rape, forced abortion, forced sterilization, sexual abuse, pregnancy, childbirth and the killing of their newborns. Most of these are uniquely female experiences and women suffered them as women and as Jews.²⁰

Coerced sexual activities, prostitution, and sex for survival also formed part of women’s gendered experience of the Holocaust. Research on women’s *involvement* as perpetrators in the Nazi genocide has been less forthcoming.²¹ A notable exception is Wendy Lover’s *Hitler’s Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields*. This book documents the involvement of 13 ‘ordinary’ women (nurses, teachers, secretaries and wives of SS members) as witnesses, accomplices and killers of Nazi genocide. However, compared to the copious amount of published work on the role of men (see for example Christopher Browning’s *Ordinary Men*), there is little on the role of female perpetrators or female camp guards in particular.²² This lack of information may be due to limited available data about female perpetrators: the number of women interrogated after the war was minimal, and so the kind of material that was gathered about men does not exist for women.²³ Ten percent of camp employees were female and women were only partial members of the SS, serving as doctors, nurses and office personnel. They did not run camps, but worked as guards in those that had women’s divisions: Stutthof, Auschwitz, Majdanek, Mauthausen, Dachau and Sachsenhausen. They assisted with the killing programme and played key roles, for example, in selection processes and participating in various punishments.²⁴ Some engaged in the violent abuse of prisoners involving torture and sexual brutality.²⁵

It is against this backdrop that we consider cinematic representations of rape and sexual violence in Holocaust-related films. These are analyzed for the way in which they portray the sexed positions of men and women. As Schweickart argues, for the male, texts, regardless of whether they approximate the particularities of his own experience, equate maleness with humanity. As such, the male feels affinity with the universal. Females, on the other hand, are taught to renounce their own identity and identify with the universal male.²⁶ As Fetterley points out, they are taught to accept a male system of values as normal and legitimate, which leads to their immasculation. This immasculation, she argues, doubles women's oppression. Firstly woman is rendered powerless from not seeing her own experiences represented and legitimized in art. In short, she is rendered invisible. Secondly, this powerlessness "results from endless division of self against self, the consequence of the invocation to identify as male while being reminded that to be male - to be universal - ...is to be *not female*."²⁷

Fetterley states that aside from "the castrating bitch stereotype" (most notably relating to the eponymous *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS*) where men are emasculated "the cultural reality is not the emasculation of men by women, but the *immasculation* of women by men..."²⁸ Put simply, within androcentric texts, patriarchal understandings of gender are reproduced: being male/masculine is valorized, while being female/feminine is devalued and denied agency. This leads to woman's repression and powerlessness. We are presented with a curious duality within the cinematic representations discussed here: as Subjects, women (through their identification with the male) are invisible. As Objects, their suffering, either through eroticization or fetishization, is focused upon with an exacting (male) gaze. This will be unpacked as we discuss the films.

Our task here is to explore how gender and sexual agency are coded, performed and represented in these films. We will be asking whether gender hierarchies and, by extension, gender inequalities are addressed and reproduced in these films. We do so by unpacking the three categories of analysis outlined above and by drawing upon various theoretical perspectives. The overarching theme of our discussion is Caldwell's notion of *simulacra gender code and power simulacra*, used to describe gender processes and consequences.²⁹ Focusing on the issue of gender

‘realness,’ and drawing upon the work of Jean Baudrillard and Judith Butler, Caldwell acknowledges that gender is at once categorically a simulacra in construction, but also real in its consequences.³⁰ For Baudrillard, “[s]imulation is no longer that of territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal.”³¹ In other words, “[i]n a hyperreality, “reality” itself has collapsed, and only image, illustration, or simulation is left.”³² Thus, for Baudrillard, “[i]t is no longer a question of imitation, nor of reduplication, nor even of parody. It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself.”³³

Following on from this, Caldwell argues that in a postmodern culture, ‘realness’ is about the grasping of hyperreal tags of identity, such as those relating to gender. In this context, identity is something to be consumed, produced and performed. These hyperreal tags of gender identity have been socially constructed as the correct way of categorizing and understanding our gendered experiences. As we know, gender is understood relationally and hierarchically. The (normative) binary pair relations - male/female masculine/feminine – ascribe agency and power to men, while objectifying the female. As Caldwell points out, “the power behind these gender tags is that they function as *simulacra gender code*.”³⁴ Based on Baudrillard’s notion of simulation, simulacra gender code, Caldwell argues, is “the postmodern theory of gender ‘realness’ - or ‘*power simulacra*’ in that they are based on a construction of gender identity, informed by a cultural ‘code’ for conception, and backed by this cultural conception for their very image-reality.”³⁵ Using the example of the American military, Caldwell explains that gender has been constructed in such a way that masculinity functions as the dominant *power-simulacra* with regards to gender hierarchy. Gender value is constructed as ‘masculine’ and this masculinist taxonomy functions as the ‘real’ to which all gendered expression are measured and judged. To paraphrase Caldwell, the dominant simulacrum of gender has been conceptualized within the military as masculine and this is its hyperreality.³⁶

Various writers have argued that Holocaust-related films reproduce patriarchal understandings of Nazi genocide. Furthermore, reminiscent of Schweickart’s thesis, these films reaffirm the universality of man whilst reifying gender stereotypes of female passivity and vulnerability.³⁷ These films emphasize heroic masculine individualism or heroism that embodies “dominative masculinity.”³⁸ Following on

from Caldwell's analysis, we can argue that there has been a general tendency for Holocaust-related films to present masculinity as the dominant *power-simulacra* with regards to gender hierarchy. Our aim here is to decide whether these films problematize the simulacra gender code. Or, ultimately, are they folded back within a masculinized hyperreality. We map out this discussion across three overlapping discussions. Firstly, we look to the framing of the female body. Our focus then draws back to consider the ways in which the female-as-object is regarded by the male gaze. Finally, we see how the S/M relationship of *The Night Porter* confuses and plays with these established power dynamics, visual codes and narratives.

It is important to note that this piece is not a commentary on Naziplotaiton cinema *per se*, nor the wider debates about art, representation and the Holocaust.³⁹ Rather this piece deals explicitly with the spectacle of a "sexually saturated female body"⁴⁰ or, to use Mulvey's phrase, the "to-be-looked-at-ness" of the female body/sexuality. It is within this framework that we consider the eroticization of the female Jewish victim and the female guard.

The Eroticization of Fascism through the Framing of the Female Body

The 'to-be-looked-at-ness' of the Jewish female body is played with in Cavani's *The Night Porter*. Indeed, the eroticization of fascism is a common trope of Holocaust films.⁴¹ *The Night Porter* has been praised for its depiction of women's unique vulnerability to rape and sexual violence in the concentration camps, in addition to the long-term effects of their victimization. Yet, the film has also been criticized for its voyeuristic portrayal of Lucia "as undoubtedly erotic and even complicit in her own victimization."⁴²

Here we focus on the following scenes that are explicit in their framing of the female body. In an early flashback, Max recalls the first time he sees Lucia. Or, rather, there is the recollection of framing her through the lens of his camera. Lucia is stood, naked, in line upon her arrival at the concentration camp. Max films the new arrivals as they wait. The camera's light shines directly in Lucia's face. She is blinded and looks away. Her vulnerability in the scene is self-evident. Yet, we are formally aligned with Max's 'look.' We see her as he sees her. She is framed by Max. We see a naked young woman, blinded, turning away from our 'look.' The audience is

distanced from her vulnerability. The lens of the camera acts as an intermediary and both distances us *and* draws us into a voyeuristic relationship between the pair.⁴³

During later flashbacks we witness Max take turns in comforting and humiliating his 'little girl.' Max is shown tending to Lucia when she is unwell, kissing and wiping her wounds. Yet, in another scene we see a naked and terrified Lucia, her head shaved, running away from Max as he shoots at her. Where Horowitz collapses Goeth's gun and penis in *Schindler's List*,⁴⁴ in this instance we might see a co-mingling with the camera. Their first encounter, as described above, is marked by his 'shooting' of her as she stands naked. Max's impotence should also be considered within this triad and we will return to that later.

In another flashback we witness an older Lucia entertaining a group of male Nazis whilst wearing a partial Nazi uniform. It is the film's iconic image: she is topless, but wearing suspenders, a peaked cap and leather gloves. She has cropped hair and her body is emaciated. Her bare breasts are the only reminder of her femininity. As Valentine argues, her vulnerability is laid bare.⁴⁵ Both of these scenes invoke a voyeuristic interest – a to-be-looked-at-ness - of a helpless young woman. In the former, we see Lucia through Max's camera lens. His is the preeminent position of power and authority. We are forced to identify with his character. As Valentine puts it, "[t]he camera represents both the power of a gun and of the phallus, symbolizing the prescient colonization of her body and mind."⁴⁶ In the latter, the audience, Copeland suggests, feels as though they are witnesses to a private erotic dance.⁴⁷ Again, we see Lucia, albeit in a fetishized manner. Yet, now the gaze is aligned with that of the male guards.

It is useful to juxtapose Max's 'look', mediated through his handheld camerawork, with that of the documentary-aping style of *Schindler's List*. Steven Spielberg has been similarly criticized for his "fetishistic and sadistic portrayal of the naked (female) victim"⁴⁸ most notably during the gas chamber/shower scene. This sequence sees the female characters led into a shower room with the foreknowledge (along with that of the audience) that they are to be gassed. The audience has the experience of peering, through a peephole at a group of beautiful naked women. The women shriek and whimper. They huddle together. Yet, instead of Zyklon B coursing

through the clanking pipework, it is water. This has been described as "...a scene pornographic both for its depiction of terrified, naked Jewish women and for its use of the gas chamber to provoke the viewer's sense of suspense."⁴⁹ The audience's 'look' through the peephole is clandestine. It is distanced. It is also another occasion (not simply within the broader 'genre', but within the film itself) where the camera eroticizes the Jewish female body. Indeed, the peephole is a recurrent device within Holocaust cinema for depicting sadistic violence. Kerner states that the peephole enables the audience's scopophilic pleasure at the spectacle of human suffering.⁵⁰ Picart and Frank, argue that the peephole/camera in *Schindler's List* does not consider the role of the viewer-voyeur, nor does it question the complexities of the victim-victimizer dynamic. Rather, through the use of the peephole, soft-core pornographic effects are used to depict the terror of naked women.⁵¹ Fundamentally, the peephole serves to separate the audience from the victimized women and thus from direct participation in their eroticized humiliation. Here we are reminded of Mulvey's notion of women's exhibitionist role,⁵² as an object to be looked at and displayed. Of course, there are parallels here with the representation of Lucia within *The Night Porter* that we will explore further shortly.

There is considerably less subtlety in the eroticization of fascism in *Love Camp 7*. Upon arrival in the camp, the women are hosed down and then forced to remove their sodden clothes in preparation for invasive 'medical' examinations. Once dragged to a table, their legs are spread and held apart by male guards while a female guard examines them. The women are brutalized throughout the film. This is done through a lens of eroticized violence. The guards taunt them by stripping, beating, biting and groping them. The camera lingers on the women's agonized faces. There are repeated close-ups of hands mauling breasts and of bruised flesh. Serfozo and Farrell argue that what the women are forced to wear "serve[s] as a language in which male dominance and female submission are articulated."⁵³ The women lie around in skimpy nightshirts that barely cover their bodies, suggesting consent to sexual degradation. These nightshirts, as Serfozo and Farrell argue, offer "'easy access' to modes of demystification and degradation." Throughout the film their shirts are grabbed and pulled back to reveal their bare breasts: "[t]he camera indulges this fantasy of demystification by lingering on their exposedness."⁵⁴

Of course, the fetishization of the Nazi uniform similarly plays into the eroticized depictions of the female guards. Their violence is coded as sexual perversion.⁵⁵ Frost argues that, regardless of the cinematic genre, "...the association of fascism with deviant sexuality and perversity is so well established, so widely assumed, that it surfaces in every genre and has become a cliché..."⁵⁶ Similarly, Picart and Frank state that "the tie between eroticized violence, the fetishism of Nazi symbols, and the perpetuation of Nazi-as-sexualized-monster has come to function as an international visual narrative currency."⁵⁷ When films go beyond the familiar male victimizer/female victim model, presenting instead a feminized male tortured body, there is a cost. In order to preserve the dichotomous construction of masculinity versus femininity, the powerful female body has to be presented in a negative way. This is the "feminine-as-monstrous."⁵⁸ Indeed, female perpetrators are portrayed as one-dimensional and are equated with "absence, abjection, sadism, masochism, excess and violence."⁵⁹

In *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS*, the eponymous antagonist is a blonde, blue-eyed Aryan Nazi dominatrix.⁶⁰ She is a female villain - or, in a somewhat crude and literal framing, a feminazi⁶¹ - who sadistically castrates men. This feminine-as-monstrous is a warning of what happens when women explode from the enclosed realm of the private sphere into the public world.⁶² More than that, Ilsa, as a femme fatale, becomes a metaphor for transgressions of sexuality and morality.⁶³ Indeed, Rapaport argues that *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS* is more of a horror film than a pornographic one.⁶⁴ Horror is centrally concerned with transgression. It represents socio-cultural anxieties. In this scenario, Ilsa (ironically enough) is the object upon which male fears about female (sexual) agency are projected. Dressed in a Nazi uniform, Ilsa's masculine exterior, one of militarism and power, is confused by her bulging feminine attributes. Ultimately, however, female agency and control is diminished through the eroticization and fetishization of her body. Indeed, the objectification of women - either through victimization or monsterization - reiterates the dominant simulacra gender code: masculinized hyperreality. This speaks to our earlier discussion regarding the immasculation of the female subject and the Subject/Object duality. Conversely, we can also read the female-as-object threatening the male gaze.

The Male Gaze and the Attraction/Anxiety Paradox

Mulvey identifies two contradictory aspects of the pleasurable structures of looking in conventional cinema. In the first, woman is displayed as an erotic object for the characters within the film. In the second, she serves as the erotic object for the viewer. According to Mulvey, unlike the objectification of women on screen (her "to-be-looked-at-ness"), men are the spectators: they possess the controlling gaze. Despite the ubiquity of male power, the female protagonist threatens to emasculate. Mulvey highlights the paradox between the scopophilic instinct - the pleasure in looking (active male) at the erotic object (passive female) - and the ego libido: the unpleasure of looking at the female figure who lacks a penis.⁶⁵ In her words: "in psychoanalytic terms the female body is... a source of anxiety, constantly threatening to return the subject to an original, traumatic, repressed memory of castration..."⁶⁶ Here, drawing on both the female Nazi guard and the Jewish victim, as they relate to the films under discussion, we consider voyeurism, the male gaze and castration anxiety.

Ilsa embodies the 'castrating bitch' stereotype. Yet, her appeal is derived from a confused overlapping of voyeuristic thrill, male gaze and castration anxiety. In this regard, it is worth remembering the Freudian notion that substitutes castration with blindness: sight and sex stand for one another. To cut at one is to cut at another. This ouroboros-like relationship underpins much of *Ilsa*. With regards to the attraction, fear and revulsion paradigm, Mulvey argues that patriarchal mythology (that positions femininity as an enigma) has presented an "...image of female beauty as artifact or mask, as an exterior, alluring, and seductive surface that conceals an interior space containing deception and danger."⁶⁷ This "...dialectics of inside and outside' ...is central...to understanding representations of femininity in socially constructed fantasy..."⁶⁸ The exterior mask of beauty conceals an interior of mystery and danger. These female monsters are women whose beauty, intellect and ambition render them dangerous. These hybrid creatures, Picart and Frank argue, are at once powerful, compelling, vulnerable and repulsive.⁶⁹ With specific reference to the Nazi femme fatale, Ravetto argues that woman "marks the site of abjection." She represents all of the undesirable qualities that man seeks to banish from himself: "violence, sexual perversion, sexual ambiguity, and homosexuality."⁷⁰

Here we can draw on the work of Freud and Lacan. Freud's 'castration complex' refers jointly to unconscious processes of desire, fantasy and anxiety in relation to the presence or absence of the penis. For Lacan, castration symbolizes a lack in the subject. Drawing on Lacan's Law of the phallus, desire is always the desire of the Other, that is, a desire for the other's desire for us. For the male Subject, who may come to possess the phallus, Subject formation/sexed position is complete. Thus, man is powerful.⁷¹ To fold this back to our earlier discussion about Caldwell's work, masculinity becomes the regulatory frame. It becomes the dominant power simulacra. For the female Subject who is denied this possession, Subject formation/sexed position is incomplete. It denotes her weakness, her immasculation.

Woman, therefore, signifies castration. This leads to either voyeuristic or fetishistic mechanisms to thwart the threat she poses.⁷² Whilst voyeurism serves as a reminder that the woman lacks a phallus, "fetishistic scopophilia"⁷³ renounces castration anxiety. Fetishism – which occurs when the fear of castration is too overbearing - works to conceal the traumatic event. As Mulvey states, "...fetishism...is born out of a refusal to see, a refusal to know, and a refusal to accept the difference that the female body symbolizes."⁷⁴ Within cinematic representations, Serfozo and Farrell argue that women as Objects become the spectacles of films while men – through their dominating gaze and refusal to be objectified - retain their active Subject-ness. Further, this controlling male gaze represents 'the look of the spectator', i.e. the audience. These female icons induce castration anxiety, leaving the male character two escape routes: voyeurism or fetishistic scopophilia.⁷⁵

In *Ilsa*, castration moves beyond the metaphorical to the literal. Male characters in the film are selected and forced to have sex with Ilsa. If they climax and fail to satisfy her sexually, they are castrated. The men occupy a vulnerable role while women occupy positions of power. Both Rapaport and Kerner have questioned the meaning behind such portrayals of female power. Rapaport considers how the film addresses concerns about conventional masculinity, male impotence and/or men's ability to sexually satisfy women. It is possible to locate these fears amongst the wider backlash during the 1960s and 1970s against the women's movement. For Kerner, "*Ilsa* represents what (Western) patriarchal culture fears the most: a woman 'on top', ...an independent woman with sexual agency."⁷⁶ At the end of the film, however,

through the character of Wolf, fetishistic scopophilia renounces the threat posed by Ilsa. We will return to this shortly.

This attraction/repulsion dichotomy appears in other films. In *Schindler's List* we witness Amon Goeth's struggle with his attraction to the product of his own abjection: his Jewish housemaid Helen. In a scene criticized for its erotic depiction of violence against women, Amon Goeth 'punishes' Helen Hirsch for his attraction to her. His violent outburst is the result of the tension he feels between his sexual desire for Helen and his knowledge of *Rassenschande*, the Nazi's racial defilement laws. These prohibited sexual relations between Germans and Jews to avoid contamination of the Aryan bloodline. The sequence begins with Helen emerging from the bath. She is wearing a nightdress and her erect nipples can be seen through the thin, damp fabric. Helen's near-naked body is the object of both Goeth *and* the camera's 'look.' He circles her. She trembles with fear. He debates whether or not Helen is in fact human: "I realize you are not a person in the strictest sense of the word." He asks her questions whilst touching her. Helen remains silent, but he answers for her. He touches her breast. Disgusted by his own response to the erotic draw of this "sub-human", he brutally assaults her.

For Horowitz, the women in this film, either Jewish or Aryan, only exist "as a locus of male struggle and desire." She further argues that the film reproduces the stereotypical image of the Jewish woman as an alluring dark beauty.⁷⁷ Within Nazi propaganda, the Jewess was portrayed as a temptress who tricked Aryan men into committing the crime of *Rassenschande*. Not only does this present her as a dangerous woman, it also suggests sexual agency and projects male desire onto her.

In *The Night Porter*, Lucia has been described as fascinating and enchanting.⁷⁸ As a living witness of the Holocaust, Lucia's arrival at the hotel sparks fear amongst Max and his fellow Nazi war criminals. As Wilson articulates, "[s]he may very well betray them, initiating the castration metaphor...She is a survivor of the Holocaust, therefore a witness and living reminder that historical circumstance granted them power in the camps, and then took it away."⁷⁹ When Max lets himself into Lucia's hotel room and asks 'Why did you come here?' The fear in his voice is palpable. He becomes animated and shouts: 'Why did you come here?' He cannot contain his

anger. He shouts: 'Have you come to give me away?' He slaps her and throws her to the floor screaming: 'Why, why, why?'

Max encapsulates the attraction/fear paradox: his desire for Lucia is matched by his fear that she will uncover his impotence.⁸⁰ This is highlighted in the sequence where Lucia spies on Max and the other war criminals through a crack in a door. For Wilson, this scene grants Lucia "the 'realization' that the sex/gender system that permits men to dominate women so completely has nothing to do with biology and everything to do with economic and social arrangements - which can change."⁸¹ This act of voyeurism – silently observing Max and his friends whilst they discuss the incriminating evidence against them - shifts the balance of power in the film. We can juxtapose this with Max's privileged framing of Lucia earlier in the film. Here, Lucia claims her own gaze. Folded within this is her realization that Max no longer has the ability to control her as he did in the camps. This shift from woman-as-object to man-as-spectacle opens up a space to challenge the dominant simulacra gender code. The photographic evidence, the sort of which Max himself produced, is to be turned back upon the perpetrators. Where Max had blinded the young Lucia under the glare of the camera's lights, now his desire is to "remain in the shadows." Her covert look through the slit inverts that through the peephole and camera lens. This viewing strategy undermines the gender hierarchy and reveals the tenuousness of masculine power.

Referring to the earlier flashback depicting Lucia entertaining the group of male Nazi officers, whilst Lucia is clearly fetishized by her male spectators, Wilson argues that their desire for her is outweighed by their fear and trepidation. This speaks to her agency.⁸² To reiterate, our interpretive strategy examines the privileged male gaze upon the eroticized and brutalized female body. Our focus has been to examine how sexual agency is coded within these films and whether gender inequalities are reproduced. Based on this we acknowledge the male guards' gaze directed toward Lucia. It is contrasted with the female member of the audience who seems uninterested and unsure where to look. The danger posed by Lucia is lost on her. For the men, however, "...due to her attraction/repulsion dynamic, woman represents the unsymbolizable: man's attraction to the product of his own abjection, as well as a sense of presence that always escapes him."⁸³

S/M, power and simulacra gender code

Moving on to consider how gender and sexual agency are coded, performed and represented in these films, we consider the sexual power dynamics between the male and female characters. This involves an examination of the female Jewish victim.

Where *The Night Porter* offers a nuanced account of S/M, its depiction within 'sexploitation' is much more blunt-edged. As Kerner has pointed out, reductive enactments of sadism - pleasure derived from the pain of others - undermine its philosophical underpinnings.⁸⁴ Crudely, S/M involves a 'top' (the sadist) and a 'bottom' (the masochist). This kind of representation of sadism can be found in *Ilsa*, for example. Here, Ilsa, the 'top,' derives sadistic pleasure from torturing men and women. A more carefully shaded interpretation recognizes S/M as socially codified stereotypes of gendered violence that draw on fantasies of control and subjection in the pursuit of bodily pleasure.⁸⁵ Mistakenly female desire has been presented as masochistic and self-destructive. Williams argues that when female sexuality is presented as masochistic, this expression is *performed* by women in pursuit of pleasure; thus implying that agency and consent are present.⁸⁶ In a similar vein, Serfozo and Farrell argue that the sexual politics of S/M require both the sadist and the masochist to view each other as possessing some degree of power: "[i]t is vital that the 'top' view the 'bottom' as his or her superior, while the 'bottom' must view the top as his/her temporary superior." These performances of S/M, they further argue, do not reflect real-life sexual power dynamics. Rather, they serve as a parody.⁸⁷ For Wilson, performances of S/M are not constrained by gendered hierarchies. They offer opportunities for women - and men - to act out fantasies.⁸⁸ This can involve challenging ascribed gender roles around sex and power, such as the identification of male characters as Subjects and female characters as Objects. Following this, it is possible to argue that the gender simulacra code depicts the male subjects' formation/sexed position as complete (due to his possession of the phallus) and the female subjects' formation/sexed position as incomplete (due to her lack of phallus).

Serfozo and Farrell described *Love Camp 7* as "pervert[ing] the goals of S/M by representing a very real historical struggle for survival as a game of sexual power."⁸⁹ Fundamentally they argue that the film can be read through an S/M lens.

The ways in which the women are clothed and the way in which they pose would indicate a degree of consent to their treatment. Engaging in degradation fantasies, *Love Camp 7* involves the repeated humiliation of women through prolonged scenes of sexual violence and torture. We do not view these encounters as representing S/M dynamics. To offer a degree of subtlety, that is perhaps absent from the film, we would suggest that we see acquiescence within a gray zone rather than consent. There is one sequence, however, that is unexpectedly more sophisticated than either of these readings. This is where the two American agents, WAC Lt. Linda Harman (played by Maria Lease) and WAC Lt. Grace Freeman (played by Kathy Williams), are forced to have sex with their guards: a stereotypical German brute and the somewhat incongruously American-accented Sgt Gotthardt (as played by Wes Bishop). The scene juxtaposes Linda Harman screaming whilst being violated by the first guard with a conversation between Freeman and Gotthardt. Diegetic whimpering and grunting play over Gotthardt's dialogue concerning the conflict he feels in 'following orders.' Freeman appears to acquiesce to his sexual advances. The German-accented guard is brutal. He cuffs Harman across the face. This is all the more shocking as we cut back to Freeman stroking Gotthardt's face and wrapping her legs around him. This is a prolonged scene and there are repeated close-ups of the first agent's anguished face intercut with the other, seemingly consensual, couple. We cut back to see Linda Harman positioned on top of her victimizer. The agent does not consent to this sexual encounter. Her position on top – which suggests the opposite, i.e. consent and agency – is incongruous given the close-ups of her horrified and terrified face. It is also anomalous given that her fellow agent – who seems to gain pleasure from the experience – is positioned on the bottom. In our reading this real assault upon Linda Harman is juxtaposed with Freeman's surprisingly layered role-play. Within the scene she is playing the submissive to Gotthardt's conflicted soldier. This, of course, is a mask for her real mission. However, the mission itself sees her placed in this compromised position by her superior officers, men who have already described her and Harman as "worse than whores." At each layer of this role-play, Freeman's agency fluctuates. Ultimately, this scene simply reinforces traditional gender hierarchies. As such, it is of a piece with all of the other depictions of gendered violence within the film.

Conversely, *The Night Porter* offers both Lucia, and women who identify with

her, the opportunity to do what may be considered impossible in the real life: “to simultaneously indulge in submission and wrest considerable power from male victimizers.”⁹⁰ On initial viewing, this film seems to involve the immascultation of women by men. Such a rudimentary analysis likens this film to *Love Camp 7*. However, a closer viewing allows us to see that the reverse is true. From this perspective the film depicts the emasculation of men by women as evidenced by Max’s reduced status and impotence. As Wilson points out, Max’s loss of phallic power implies that his sexual power is context specific: he is only sexually potent in his role as sadistic torturer of a 16 year-old Lucia within the camp environment. Wilson is unequivocal: *The Night Porter* offers a representation of S/M that articulates change. Specifically, a female icon seizes power and transforms the dynamics of her sexual relationship. Whilst Wilson does not reclaim this as a feminist film, she does believe it offers female viewers the opportunity to identify with Lucia and challenge the androcentric canon.⁹¹ In a slightly different reading, Valentine presents the S/M relationship as a more unconscious dynamic of mutual destructives than the conscious collaboration Wilson assumes exists between Max and Lucia.⁹² Within this frame, theirs is a relationship based upon suffering, pain and cruelty.

For Valentine, Lucia is complicit in her own sexual abuse. Referring to the sexual assault that occurs after Max lets himself into her hotel room, Valentine suggests that Lucia finds his cruelty sexually exciting.⁹³ During this scene they play fight and Lucia laughs as they wrestle with one another on the floor. This is pre-figured in an earlier sequence shortly after Lucia has first arrived at the hotel and had the shock of seeing Max again. There is a stirring in Lucia as she contemplates the implication of their reunion. Indeed, we can note the disappointment on Lucia’s face when a porter knocks at her room door only for it to be revealed that it is not Max. Departing from this, Hake believes that Max’s sexual abuse of Lucia is a means of punishing the masochistic tendencies within himself.⁹⁴

Here we provide a slightly different analysis. Towards the end of the film, when Max and Lucia are in his apartment, they have sex. The encounter begins with them licking jam off each other’s fingers. This is clearly erotically charged. Lucia licks Max’s face. She teases him and then initiates sex. She is positioned on top. As argued above, Max’s phallic power is context specific. Yet, in this scene, positioned

on the bottom, he is able to perform sexually and reach an orgasm. At the end of the scene, Lucia herself seems surprised that she has reversed the dynamics of their relationship and has 'cured' Max's impotence. Here we witness the power and value of the feminine.

Discussion: Androcentrism and the Immasculation of Women

Schweickart advises that in order to move beyond the process of immasculation the female reader must do more than simply engage in a bifurcated response by reading the text as both a man and a woman. Instead, she must read it as it was not intended to be read. She must read it against itself. Further, she must read the text not as Other, but as equal to man.⁹⁵ Here we can advise a similar viewing strategy for female audiences. There is scope within this to construct a new simulacra gender code, a hyperreal category of gender that does not necessitate the immasculation of women. Drawing on the themes of male heroes/dominative masculinity, Nazi costumes and The Law of the Phallus, as well as the female superwoman, there are possible conclusions that can be drawn.

It was argued that Holocaust-related films reproduce patriarchal understandings of the Nazi genocide, thereby reaffirming the universality of man and heroic masculine individualism. This 'story' (Baudrillard) or 'power simulacra' (Caldwell) is present in *Love Camp 7*, *Ilsa*, and *Schindler's List*.⁹⁶ In the former two films, either the American or British soldiers take on the role of rescuer and hero. At the end of *Love Camp 7* the French underground come to rescue the women. The women do stand up to the guards and take revenge, but only after they realize that the men have come to assist them. In *Ilsa* Wolfe, the German-born naturalized American prisoner of war, emerges the hero of the film and Ilsa its female-as-monster. It is Wolfe, "the quintessential stud,"⁹⁷ who leads the climactic resistance. In the finale, Wolfe dupes Ilsa. He gags and ties her to her bed. A female prisoner, who has been tortured throughout the film, crawls towards the prone Ilsa. She attempts to kill her with a knife but dies before being able to do so. The prisoner's bloodied and tortured body collapses on top of Ilsa. Ilsa looks into the camera and gives a strangled scream. Finally, a smiling SS officer shoots Ilsa in the head. He provides the film's final lines of dialogue. He informs his general (who had earlier begged Ilsa to urinate upon him) that the camp "has ceased to exist...The Allies will find nothing." One should perhaps

be careful in reading too much into the directorial intent here. However, it is telling that Ilsa's female victim is not allowed to penetrate her. Her cathartic act of violence is denied. Her role is to provide a final curdled titillating thrill as she slumps bloodied and naked across her victimizer. Ilsa's death comes from a fairly minor male character who had, until this point, only briefly appeared as the general's personal assistant. Ilsa might well represent the female-as-monster, but the male characters ensure that even her infamy is diminished by the eradication of the camp.

Waterhouse-Watson and Brown highlight the marginalization of female rescuers in *Schindler's List*.⁹⁸ They state that Oskar Schindler's wife Emilie, who played a vital role in saving Jews in the historical events, is relegated to that of forgiving dupe within the film. Whilst the film focuses on Oskar's transformation and rehabilitation into a Christ-like figure,⁹⁹ the heroism displayed by Emilie - most notably her rescuing of 250 Jews from an abandoned train - is ignored. Simply put, the rape victims of *Love Camp 7*, the female-as-monster Ilsa and the forgiving dupe Emilie are each presented as lesser than their male counterparts.

In terms of gender and the spectacle of the body, penetrative sex is absent in *Love Camp 7* and the men are never naked. They maintain their subject-ness and resist objectification. Returning to our interpretive strategy, specifically our question about whether or not these films problematize the simulacra gender code, we posit that *Love Camp 7* presents masculinity as the dominant power-simulacra.

Furthermore we do not recognize these encounters as S/M. For us, the film - through the immasculation of women - reiterates female repression and powerlessness. Costumes - in the form of Nazi uniforms - represent those who have power and those who do not. The absence of the penis - juxtaposed with female nakedness - ironically reaffirms the Law of the Phallus. As with *Love Camp 7*, male nudity is also largely absent in *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS*. When Ilsa inspects the genitals of new male arrivals, we only see them from behind. Given the theme of castration and male impotence, the penis is, paradoxically, omnipresent but almost never visualized. This is in contrast to the pervasive full frontal female nudity. While Lucia wears a Nazi uniform (of sorts) during her erotic dance in *The Night Porter*, the trousers are too big and she is topless. The oversized clothing hints at the inappropriateness of a woman, metaphorically, wearing the trousers. At first glance,

her bare breasts on her emaciated body speak to her objectification. The forced nudity reveals a recognizably feminine form. Yet, her emaciated form is on the pathway - so familiar from Holocaust imagery of female nakedness - to a sexlessness. This is a doubled, compounded attack on her femininity. Yet, Lucia's dance, subject as it is to a leering gaze, demonstrates her agency within these attacks.

As stated earlier, Ilsa's goal is to create a superwoman who can withstand more pain than men. Her attempt fails: the women do not survive. Despite this, Dyanne Thorne, the actress who played Ilsa, stated that Ilsa is 'on top' and that she should be regarded as "the leader of the feminists."¹⁰⁰ For Rapaport, Dyanne Thorne's attempt to portray Ilsa as a 'superwoman' is misguided. For her, "Ilsa falls into traditional gender expectations as she is ultimately tamed by Wolfe's sexual power."¹⁰¹ More than that, she is unable to control men's bodies. Perhaps more importantly:

...excessive female desire and female domination is a common male fantasy. Thus, films portraying nymphomaniacs and female domination could also be understood as reinforcing conventional masculinity – the women appear to overly crave and dominate men, but since men are receiving what they (secretly) desire, men are at least partly in control.¹⁰²

A number of writers have portrayed Lucia as a powerful, agentic female icon.¹⁰³ Whilst they acknowledge Lucia's early victimization and vulnerability, they focus more on her later agency. If we consider the scene in which Lucia performs for SS guards, she is not wearing the dress Max gave her, rather she is wearing an officer's (partial) uniform:

Although clearly fetishized by male spectators, she is nevertheless active, moving into a male realm of power - or at least trying to. This accounts for the fear on the faces of the men watching; they look at her with desire, but mostly trepidation.¹⁰⁴

Arguably, this calls into question the success of their attempts to thwart the threat of castration. As discussed above, we come to a different conclusion regarding Lucia's attire. There are two further examples that illustrate a shift in the balance of power

between Max and Lucia. Their relationship in his apartment does not replicate their relationship in the camp. In the camp, Max had complete control over Lucia. While she seems to acquiesce to her treatment in the camp, ultimately, she has no choice. In the flat, by her own admission, she has chosen to be there. She has more agency and power. When one of Max's friends visits Lucia at his flat he describes her as disturbed for being with Max given the way he has treated her. "That's my affair", she explains. When he points out that Max has locked her up, she explains: "I'm here of my own free will". In more granular detail, there is one sequence where Lucia is depicted smoking a pipe. One can compare this with her erotic performance in the camp. Despite the fact that Lucia is wearing men's clothing, she is fetishized by the men around her. She may be in control of their gaze, but this is based on her feminine vulnerability rather than her masculine power. She is still objectified. In the latter scene, she smokes a pipe while wearing a silk negligee. Here Lucia blurs the masculine/feminine divide and presents gender identity as fluid. She challenges the notion that to be male is to *not* be female.

In a rather different reading of the film, Copeland comes to the conclusion that "an optimistic ending is not to be found in *The Night Porter*."¹⁰⁵ For Copeland, Lucia and Max's reunion threatens the comfortable and seemingly composed post-Holocaust life that she has set up for herself. The renewal of their perverse and destructive relationship is what leads to their death. She states:

By dressing in their uniforms of the Holocaust - Max in his Nazi uniform, Lucia in her pink dress - they both die symbolically representing themselves at the time when their spirits had truly died, their fates inexorably combined by the force of Max's continued sadistic authority over Lucia.¹⁰⁶

Despite Copeland's reservations, we argue that there is potential to construct a new simulacra gender code through Lucia that does not involve the immasculation of women by men. This involves acknowledging and accepting S/M dynamics as fluid, interchanagble, consensual and based on mutual sexual pleasure. Whilst it might be difficult to see Lucia as actively *playing* the role of masochistic victim - given the conditions under which their S/M relationship initially takes place – her more active and dominant role in 1957, and Max's masochism, suggests that masculine power is contextual, contingent, and not universal. We can certainly agree with de Lauretis that

this is a woman's film. For her:

[A] woman's film is a film that deals with female experience from within, that investigates the deeper strata of female experience, that seeks answers, causes, and the dialectic nature of that experience rather than presenting only a surface, whether polished or scarred.¹⁰⁷

Conclusion

In this piece, we engaged with a feminist cinematic visualization of Holocaust-related films that eroticize, monsterize and fetishize the female body. In terms of audience viewing strategies - the act of seeing and looking, and by extension recognizing and identifying¹⁰⁸ - we took on board Schweickart's advice about reading texts against themselves and sought to uncover which films reproduce masculinity as the dominant power-simulacra. Indeed, with reference to Schweickart's notion of the androcentric canon and the concomitant immasculation of women, and the tendency for Holocaust-related films to reify gender hierarchies and inequalities, we examined if female characters in these films challenge this power simulacra/simulacra gender code. Only *The Night Porter*, through the character of Lucia, offers a space in which gender value can be reconstructed as both masculine and feminine in the ways discussed above. Further, Lucia agentically plays with the duality of female Nazi and female Jewish victim. To return to Mulvey and the pleasurable structures of looking, females serve as both erotic objects for the characters within the film and for the viewing audience. In all four films discussed here, the female characters can be seen to fulfill this dual purpose. Aside from *The Night Porter* - which offers a more nuanced and contextual account of gendered relations and hierarchies - these films do not produce a new simulacra gender code, they simply reaffirm the patriarchal hyperreality: the immasculation of women by men. These cinematic representations recognize and valorize the generic masculine, whilst simultaneously appropriating and exploiting the female body.

Notes

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1. Schweickart, "Reading Ourselves," and Shapiro, "Patriarchy, Objectification, and Violence against Women."
 2. Shapiro, "Patriarchy, Objectification, and Violence against Women," 91.
 3. Horowitz, "But it is Good," 130.
 4. Ibid.

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5. Picart and Frank, *Frames of Evil*, 61.
 6. Please see appendix A for the film narratives.
 7. Magilow, "Introduction: Nazisploitation!" 2. For a discussion of exploitation cinema see Baron, *Projecting the Holocaust*; Betz, "High and Low and In Between."; Geuens, "Pornography and the Holocaust"; and Hake, "Art and Exploitation."
 8. Hake, "Art and Exploitation," 16.
 9. Stiglegger, "Cinema beyond Good," 29.
 10. See Williams, "Film Bodies" and her work on body genres.
 11. Marrone, *The Gaze and the Labyrinth*, 6.
 12. Hake, "Art and Exploitation," 15.
 13. See Hake, "Art and Exploitation"; Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*; Frost, *Sex Drives*; and Ravetto, *The Unmaking of Fascism*.
 14. Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure" and *Pandora*.
 15. S/M is used to denote indeterminacy and an opposition without fixed content. For a more detailed account see Noyes, "S/M in S/A".
 16. Brown, "Screening Women's Complicity."
 17. Meiri, "Visual Responses," 448. See also Picart and Frank, *Frames of Evil*.
 18. Waterhousie-Watson and Brown, "Mothers, Monsters, Heroes."
 19. Banwell, "Rassenschande, Genocide and the Reproductive Jewish Body." See Friedman, "Togetherness and Isolation" and *Speaking the Unspeakable*; Goldenberg, "Sex-based Violence"; Katz, "Thoughts on"; Ringelheim, "Women and the Holocaust"; Saidel, *The Jewish Women*; and Sinnreich, "And it was Something." See also the edited collections by Hedgepeth and Saidel, *Sexual Violence against Jewish Women*; Ofer and Weitzman, *Women in the Holocaust*; and Rittner and Roth, *Different Voices*.
 20. Banwell, "Rassenschande, Genocide and the Reproductive Jewish Body," 229.
 21. Brown, "Screening Women's Complicity"; Heschel, "Does Atrocity have a Gender?" Rowland provides an interesting discussion in "Reading the Female Perpetrator", where she uses queer theory to unpack representations – both on an off screen – of females' involvement in the Holocaust and the reductive masculinization of their behavior.
 22. See Brown, "Screening Women's Complicity" for a specific focus on cinematic representations of female camp guards.
 23. Heschel, "Does Atrocity have a Gender?" See Brown's *The life and Crimes of SS-Aufseherin Irma Grese*.
 24. See Bock, "Ordinary Women in Nazi Germany"; Heschel, "Does Atrocity have a Gender?"; and Rappaport, "Holocaust and Pornography."
 25. Ibid. See also Banwell "Rassenschande, Genocide and the Reproductive Jewish Body" who includes testimonies from survivors who talk about women's involvement in sadistic rape and violence.
 26. Shapiro, "Patriarchy, Objectification, and Violence against Women," 90.
 27. Fetterley, *Resisting Reader*, xiii cited by Schweickart, "Reading Ourselves," 42 (emphasis in the original).
 28. Fetterley, *The Resisting Reader*, xx cited by Schweickart, "Reading Ourselves," 41.
 29. Caldwell, *Fallgirls*, 113-114 (emphasis in the original).
 30. Ibid.
 31. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 1.

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32. Caldwell, *Fallgirls*, 115.
 33. Baudrillard *Simulacra and Simulation*, 2.
 34. Caldwell, *Fallgirls*, 116 (emphasis in the original).
 35. Ibid, emphasis in the original.
 36. Ibid, 118.
 37. Horowitz, "But it is Good"; Meiri, "Visual Responses"; Shapiro, "Patriarchy, Objectification, and Violence against Women"; and Waterhouse-Watson and Brown, "Mothers, Monsters, Heroes."
 38. Waterhouse-Watson and Brown, "Mothers, Monsters, Heroes," 9.
 39. See forthcoming article by Fiddler and Banwell, "Forget about all your Taboos": Transgressive Memory and Nazisploitation.
 40. Williams, "Film Bodies," 6.
 41. Copeland, "Double Victims"; Horowitz, "But it is Good"; and Picart and Frank, *Frames of Evil*.
 42. Copeland, "Double Victims, 42."
 43. Cavani touched upon this theme in a 1975 interview for *Films and Filming*: "The Nazis really loved the cinema and adored filming everything; they did it very well – they had some very good cameramen. A lot of the SS possessed Leicas – like the one Max has in the film: it's a genuine 1940s Leica. They just loved filming. Everything, even the worst scenes of torture. Not just the reporters – the professionals – but all of them. It was a hobby. This had a great impact on me. But the Americans are just the same: when they go to war, they like to film everything. It seems to me an attempt to become more objective, to 'distance' oneself from what is going on." See Stuart, "Consciousness and Conscience."
 44. Horowitz, "But it is Good"
 45. Valentine, "Those that the Gods,"
 46. Ibid. 447.
 47. Copeland, "Double Victims."
 48. Kerner, *Film and the Holocaust*, 7.
 49. Horowitz, "But it is Good," 128.
 50. Kerner, *Film and the Holocaust*. See also Picart and Greek, "The Compulsion of Real/Reel."
 51. Picart and Frank, *Frames of Evil*.
 52. Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure."
 53. Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-Vixens to Senators."
<http://www.yorku.ca/jspot/1/hfarrell2.htm>
 54. Ibid.
 55. Copeland, "Double Victims."
 56. Frost, *Sex Drives*, 155.
 57. Picart and Frank, *Frames of Evil*, 133.
 58. Ibid, 130
 59. Ravetto, *The Unmaking of Fascism*, 58.
 60. It is widely believed that Ilsa's character is based on Ilse Koch, wife of Karl-Otto Koch commandant of Buchenwald concentration camp. Ilse was known for her sexually sadistic behavior.
 61. See Rappaport, "Holocaust Pornography." and Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-vixens."
 62. Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-Vixens."

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63. Rappaport, "Holocaust Pornography."
 64. Ibid.
 65. Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure."
 66. Mulvey, *Pandora*, 68.
 67. Ibid.
 68. Mulvey, *Pandora*, 58-9.
 69. Picart and Frank, *Frames of Evil*
 70. Ravetto, *The Unmaking of Fascism*, 84.
 71. See Smith, *Freud-Complete Works*. See also Hook, "Psychoanalysis, Sexual Difference" and "Lacan the Meaning of the Phallus."
 72. Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure."
 73. Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-Vixens."
 74. Mulvey, *Pandora*, 7
 75. Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-Vixens."
 76. Kerner, *Film and the Holocaust*, 145. See also Rapaport, "Holocaust Pornography."
 77. Horowitz, "But it is Good," 127. See Flaschka, "Only Pretty Women"; Friedman, "Togetherness and Isolation"; and Katz, "Thoughts on." All discuss beautiful Jewish women being selected for rape and sexual violence.
 78. Copeland, "Double Victims"; Valentine, "Those that the Gods" and Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism."
 79. Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism," 3.
 80. Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism."
 81. Ibid, 3.
 82. See also de Lauretis "Cavani's Night Porter" who discusses Lucia as a protagonist.
 83. Ravetto, *The Unmaking of Fascism*, 84.
 84. Kerner, *Film and the Holocaust*. For such an analysis see the edited collection *Masochism*, which contains Deluze's essay "Coldness and Cruelty" and von Sacher Masoch's "Venus in Furs." See also Geuens, "Pornography and the Holocaust" who applies this more philosophical reading of S/M to the Nazisploitation genre.
 85. Frost, *Sex Drives*; Geuens, "Pornography and the Holocaust"; Noyes, "S/M in S/A"; Ravetto, *The Unmasking of Fascism*; and Valentine, "Those that the Gods."
 86. Williams, "Film Bodies."
 87. Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-Vixens."
<http://www.yorku.ca/jspot/1/hfarrell2.htm>
 88. Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism,"
 89. Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-Vixens."
<http://www.yorku.ca/jspot/1/hfarrell2.htm>
 90. Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism." 2.
 91. See Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism." See also de Lauretis, "Cavani's Night Porter" who also regards Max and Lucia as self-aware, conscious actors.
 92. Valentine, "Those that the Gods."
 93. Ibid.
 94. Hake, "Art and Exploitation."
 95. Schweickart, "Reading Ourselves."

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96. Baudrillard, *Seduction* and Caldwell, *Fallgirls*
 97. Serfozo and Farrell, "From Sex-Vixens."
 98. Waterhosue-Watson and Brown, "Mothers, Monsters, Heroes." See also Bartov, "Spielberg's Oskar" who discusses the heroism of Oskar Schindler.
 99. Doneson, *The Holocaust in American Film*.
 100. Cited in Rapaport, "Holocaust Pornography," 65-66.
 101. Ibid, 68
 102. Ibid, 70.
 103. De Lauretis, "Cavani's Night Porter; Mailänder, "Meshes of Power"; Renga, "Staging Memory and Trauma"; and Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism."
 104. Wilson, "The Power of Eroticism," 4. See also Renga, "Staging Memory and Trauma."
 105. Copeland, "Double Victims," 34.
 106. Ibid, 36
 107. de Lauretis, "Cavani's Night Porter, 35.
 108. Meiri, "Visual Responses."

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Appendix A: Film narratives

***Love Camp 7* (1968, dir. R L Frost, USA).**

The film, told by an English officer, is about an undercover mission. The two female protagonists are sent to a "Nazi love camp" (a camp where women are held captive for the sexual pleasure of Nazi officers and soldiers) to retrieve information from an imprisoned Jewish woman that will help the Allies end the war. When they arrive at the camp the SS guard informs them: "I cannot guarantee you that you will *love* Love Camp 7, but I can guarantee that you will *love* in Love Camp 7. You have been brought here for one purpose and one purpose only and that is to please the front line officers". "To please will be your only function." Throughout the film the women are subjected to repeated acts of sexual humiliation and eroticized violence. At the end of the film, with the help of an international rescue team, the women take revenge on the

guards and escape with the required military information.

Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS (1975, dir Don Edmonds, Canada).

The film is set in a Nazi Medical Camp. Ilsa, commandant of the camp, sadistically dominates men and women during the course of the film. Men are castrated once she has had sex with them and women are forced to undergo prolonged acts of sexualized torture as part of Ilsa's experiment to prove that women can withstand pain more than men. The film contains graphic and gory scenes of sadistic violence and torture

Ilsa meets her competition when she meets Wolf, a young American prisoner. Wolf is able to maintain an erection and continuously please Ilsa without ever climaxing himself. This inability to make him climax distracts Ilsa from keeping control of the camp. Wolf takes advantage of her weakened state and plots to overthrow the camp. In the final scenes, he seduces Ilsa then ties her to the bed and escapes with the other prisoners. In the end an exposed and pathetic Ilsa is shot dead by a Nazi guard.

The Night Porter (1974, dir Liliana Cavani, Italy)

The Night Porter is based on the sadomasochistic (referred in this piece as S/M) relationship between Lucia, a Jewish holocaust survivor and Max, a former Nazi who sexually abused Lucia in a concentration camp. The film is set twelve years after the war in Vienna in 1952. Max, who works as a porter in a hotel, is trying to forget his past, but is confronted with the atrocities he committed when Lucia arrives to stay in the Hotel. They recognize each other immediately. Despite her husband's departure, and the abusive relationship Lucia endured with Max in the camp, she decides to stay on in Vienna and restart their sexual relationship. Their past relationship is revealed in a series of flashbacks. Towards the end of the film Max imprisons Lucia in his apartment. He chains her arms and legs. They live in the apartment without food or contact with the outside world. The film ends with the murder of Max and Lucia by former SS officers who are fearful of their relationship.

Schindler's List (1994, dir. Steven Spielberg, USA).

Schindler's List tells the story of Oskar Schindler, a German profit-seeking businessman who exploits his position to secure business investments during the war.

With the help of Jewish investors Schindler sets up a factory. Schindler realizes the fate of the Jews and decides to rescue them by employing them to work in his factory. Meanwhile we are introduced to Amon Goeth, a sadistic Nazi officer, who, upon visiting the construction site of what will become Plaszów labor camp, executes a female construction worker for answering back. Schindler and Goeth are frequently paralleled throughout the film, particularly when it comes to their treatment with women they find attractive. Eventually, Schindler compiles a list of over 1,000 Jewish names. He persuades Goeth to sell his workers so they can work in his factory in Czechoslovakia. The workers remain there until the war ends.