

## Psychoanalytic Takes on the Cinema

Please join us for the following sessions



### Discussion of the Film: *The Shining*

Discussant: Alex Smith, PsyD

Friday, October 25, 2024, 4:00pm-5:30pm

Via Zoom

1.5 CME/CE

1980 (144 mins)

**Directors:** Stanley Kubrick

*A family relocates to an isolated hotel for the winter, where a sinister presence influences the father into episodes of violence while his psychic son sees horrifying forebodings from the past and the future.*

**Presentation:** As in all great horror cinema, Kubrick's *The Shining* (1980) uses the haunted house motif to iterate upon essential human problems. The Torrances have

kept their most overwhelming thoughts and feelings at some precarious distance, only to encounter them in toto in the Overlook Hotel, a repository of cast-off intrapsychic material. Jack Torrance's thinly-veiled rage and vulnerability, now laid bare, plunges the family into unboundaried chaos. Kubrick's interest in the border between constriction and absurdism adds additional layers to the film, where what at first seems to be comical visual chaff adds not only texture, but meaningful fragments of disallowed impulses.

In horror cinema—where less conscious thoughts and feelings are realized in ghastly acts and fantastical forms—the haunted house remains an evergreen motif. Indeed, the haunted location remains a nearly universal fascination, reaching across cultures and generations. Like other horror motifs, the haunted house represents an exercise in the cozily distanced investigation of the most painful aspects of the human experience. What might be overwhelming if recognized and processed internally is parceled out onto the external. Ghosts, hallways gushing blood, and iced over hedge mazes—while less human and fantastical—become containers for our most primal fears, conflicts, and overwhelming ideas.

Together, we will consider the horror narrative from a psychoanalytic lens, and the haunted house motif specifically. From there, we will develop some rudimentary morphology within the idea of projection, taking an interest in the idea of the disembodied and the embodied as overlapping yet unique projective mechanisms. With these general ideas in tow, we will investigate the rendering of the thematic material within the implausible and the absurd in *The Shining*.

**Discussant: Alex Smith, PsyD** is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at The George Washington University. He holds a Master of Fine Arts from The New School and a Doctor of Psychology from The George Washington University. His stories have appeared in *The New Flesh: A Literary Tribute to David Cronenberg* and *Theaker's Quarterly Fiction*. Alex practices psychotherapy and psychological assessment in Washington, DC, and supervises clinicians in training at the Psychiatric Institute of Washington.



## Discussion of the Film: Marcel the Shell with Shoes On

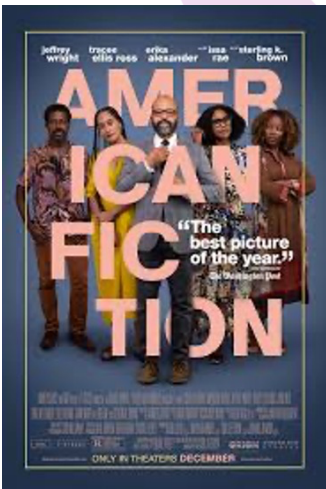
**Discussant: Jonathan Stillerman, PhD**  
**Friday, January 31, 2025, 4:00pm-5:30pm**  
**Via Zoom**  
**1.5 CME/CE**

2021 (89 mins)  
**Directors:** Dean Fleischer Camp

*A documentary maker struggling with finances decides to make to make his newest documentary about a mollusk shell he finds living in his Airbnb with his friends.*

**Presentation:** As psychotherapists and psychoanalysts, we are constantly confronted with and immersed in our clients' experiences of trauma and loss. But how often do we explore moments of awe in our clients' lives and our own? And how often do we experience awe in the clinical encounter itself? Through a discussion of the 2023 animated mockumentary, Marcel the Shell with Shoes On, we will focus on the role of awe in life and in therapy and examine its potential to mitigate grief and isolation and boost our resilience in the face of personal and communal experiences of trauma and loss.

**Discussant: Jonathan Stillerman, PhD, CGP**, is a clinical psychologist and Certified Group Psychotherapist with a private practice of psychotherapy, supervision and consultation in Washington, DC. As faculty at the New Washington School of Psychiatry, Dr. Stillerman teaches in the Clinical Program on Psychotherapy Practice and serves as Co-Chair of the National Group Psychotherapy Institute. He also held previous appointments as Adjunct Faculty at The American University and Assistant Clinical Professor of Clinical Psychology at The George Washington University. Dr. Stillerman has been leading therapy groups for 25 years and currently runs several weekly psychotherapy groups and a training group specifically for group therapists. Alongside his clinical practice and teaching, Dr. Stillerman is a published poet, and in a former life, he co-founded and co-directed Men Can Stop Rape, a national non-profit empowering male youth to prevent gender-based violence.



## Discussion of the Film: American Fiction

**Discussant: Katherine Marshall Woods, PsyD**  
**Thursday, February 27, 2025, 1:00pm-4:00pm**  
**(Hybrid Event)**  
**The Textile Museum**  
**701 21st St NW, Washington, DC 20052**  
**and Via Zoom**  
**2 CME/CE**

2023 (117 mins)  
**Directors:** Dean Fleischer Camp

*A novelist disheartened by the literary industry profiting from the use of Black authors and narratives uses a pen name to craft a story that earns him acclaim while propelling him into hypocrisy.*

**Presentation:** This presentation will consider how racially crafted stereotypes located in literary and film works have permeated artistic mediums over the last century. Jefferson's *American Fiction* depicts an esteemed scholar and novelist frustrated by the narratives published in the literary world that perpetuates racial stereotypes influencing the ways in which people of color are imagined and understood in the world. Within this presentation, racial stereotypes frequently depicted are examined understanding that their insidious residue

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exist within quotidian dynamics, including therapy rooms. This film carefully examines the roles artists and audiences have to uphold racial stereotypes within present day artistic expressions, while challenging one to consider how minority artists have contended with these stereotypes and navigated systems that depict their identity as the other. *American Fiction* directly confronts these systemically racially charged dynamics while being curious regarding whose voices and narratives are silenced and whose are celebrated.

**Discussant: Katherine Marshall Woods, PsyD** (she/her), is a media psychologist and licensed clinical psychologist in Washington, DC. She is a member of core faculty with The George Washington University Professional Psychology Program and is in private practice serving those with a history of trauma. Dr. Marshall Woods spearheads PsychMinded Media that affords her the opportunity to work with actors, screenwriters, producers, and directors and collaborate with film festivals in the US and abroad. Dr. Marshall Woods co-leads the Psychoanalytic Takes on Cinema with the Washington Baltimore Center for Psychoanalysis and is developer of Cinematic Imprints with American Psychological Association's Division 39, Society for Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Psychology.

Dr. Marshall Woods has contributed blogs for The Huffington Post, the former American Psychological Association's PsycCRITIQUES, and currently has a column with Psychology Today and blogs with Thrive Global and Medium regarding psychology, film and media works. She has authored the book, *Best Psychology in Film*, which has become an award-winning television show and podcast that she produces and hosts with UDctv. Her recent publication release in 2024 is *Black Film Through a Psychodynamic Lens*. Additionally, Dr. Marshall Woods has lent her expertise to a number of media outlets, such as News Channel 8, NPR, The Huffington Post, The Daily Drum and is the host and coproducer of *A Healthy Mind* television show.

#### References:

Bucciferro, C. (2021). Representations of gender and race in Ryan Coogler's film Black Panther: Disrupting Hollywood tropes. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 38(2),169–182. DOI: 10.1111/jpcu.12830.2)

Marshall Woods, K. (2024). Psychology and popular films. In G. J. Rich, V. K. Kumar, & F. H. Farley (Eds.), *Handbook of Media Psychology: The Science and the Practice* (pp. 131–141).Cham: Springer.3)

Tan, E. S. (2018). A psychology of the film. Palgrave Communications, 4, 1–19. DOI:10.1057/s41599-018-0111-y.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Describe how the use of psychodynamic in cinema provides an experiential-based environment for exploring clinical concepts.
2. Identify psychodynamic concepts present in the films we discuss and give examples of how they offer insights into clinical practice.

**Registration Link:** [https://wbcp.memberclicks.net/reg\\_psych\\_takes\\_cinema\\_24-25](https://wbcp.memberclicks.net/reg_psych_takes_cinema_24-25)

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE for First Session: [Wednesday, October 23, 2024](#)**

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## Registration Fees (per session):

I do not need CME/CE

No Fee

I want CME/CE

\$30.00

### ALL FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

**Katherine Marshall Woods, PsyD, Program Co-Chair**  
**Sarah Hedlund, PhD, Program Co-Chair**

*Continuing Education Units are not issued for partial attendance.*

*CVs Available Upon Request*

*There is no known commercial support for this program.*

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The American Psychoanalytic Association designates this live activity for a maximum of 5.0 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)*<sup>™</sup>. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

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