

Filmvisio

Research Article | Araştırma Makalesi

Open Access | Açık Erişim

The Overlook Hotel as an Ontological Agent: Object-Oriented Ontology and Film Analysis

Ontolojik Bir Özne Olarak Overlook Oteli: Nesne Yönelimli Ontoloji ve Film Analizi



Mustafa Türkan ¹  

¹ Bahçeşehir University, Cinema and Media Research, Istanbul, Türkiye

Abstract

In this article, I move beyond the usual human-centred perspectives that so often possess film analysis, directing attention instead to the significance and agency of objects themselves. By anchoring this discussion in the framework of object-oriented ontology (OOO), I argue that every object in a film can act not merely as part of the backdrop but also as an agentic presence in its own right. I propose conceptualising the object as an ontological unit existing beyond its outward attributes, independent of human experience. Focusing on Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* (1980), I contend that the Overlook Hotel is depicted as an almost living, ominous entity, enveloping the audience in a way that aesthetically reveals the film's phenomenal-noumenal duality. I then connect OOO's ideas—such as the tension between object and its qualities, the asymmetry of metaphor, and vicarious causation—to the film's visual and auditory components. I summarise this approach as the film's process of reframing itself as a new object and thereby making the viewer's experience a constitutive element of its ontology. Therefore, in the case of *The Shining*, I argue that the Overlook Hotel—laden with cultural codes—operates as an independent subject within the cinematic universe, thereby prompting a thorough re-evaluation of the ontological position of objects.

Öz

Bu makalede, film analizini sıklıkla egemenliği altına alan alışıldık insan merkezli bakış açılarının ötesine geçiyor ve bunun yerine nesnelerin kendilerinin önemine ve failliğine dikkat çekiyorum. Tartışma nesne-yönelimli ontoloji (NYO) çerçevesine yerleştirildiğinde, bir filmdeki her nesnenin yalnızca dekorun bir parçası olmakla kalmayıp aynı zamanda kendi başına faal bir varlık olarak hareket edebilir. Bu yüzden nesneyi dış niteliklerinin ötesinde, insan deneyiminden bağımsız olarak var olan ontolojik bir birim şeklinde kavramsallaştırmayı öneriyorum. Stanley Kubrick'in *The Shining* (1980) filmi üzerinde, Overlook Oteli'nin neredeyse yaşayan varlık gibi yansıtıldığını ve filmin "fenomen-numen" ikiliğini estetik açıdan ortaya koyacak şekilde izleyiciyi kuşattığını savunuyorum. Ardından, NYO'nun nesne-nitelik arasındaki gerilim, metaforik asimetri ve dolaylı nedensellik gibi kavramlarını filmin görsel ve işitsel öğeleriyle ilişkilendiriyorum. Bu yaklaşımı, filmin kendisini yeni bir nesne olarak yeniden konumlandırması ve izleyicinin deneyimini onun ontolojisinin kurucu bir unsuru haline getirmesi süreci olarak tanımlıyorum. Dolayısıyla *The Shining* örneğinde, kültürel kodlarla yüklü Overlook Oteli'nin, sinematik evrende bağımsız bir özne gibi davranarak nesnelerin ontolojik konumuna dair kapsamlı bir yeniden değerlendirme yapılmasını teşvik ettiğini iddia ediyorum.

Keywords

object-oriented ontology · film criticism · *The Shining* · metaphor · metaphysics

Anahtar Kelimeler

nesne-yönelimli ontoloji · film eleştirisi · *The Shining* · metafor · metafizik



“ Citation | Atıf: Türkan, M. (2025). The Overlook Hotel as an ontological agent: Object-oriented ontology and film analysis. *Filmvisio*, (5), 66-86. <https://doi.org/10.26650/Filmvisio.2025.0007>

© This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. 

© 2025. Türkan, M.

✉ Corresponding author | Sorumlu Yazar: Mustafa Türkan mustafa.turkan@bahcesehir.edu.tr



Filmvisio

<https://filmvisio.istanbul.edu.tr/>

e-ISSN: 2980-3101

The Overlook Hotel as an Ontological Agent: Object-Oriented Ontology and Film Analysis

Agency is closely associated with human beings, largely due to our inherently anthropocentric tendencies. At first glance, talking about the agency of objects in film analysis may strike one as rather far-fetched.¹ Indeed, as the concept of object agency has not been widely recognised as a topic of philosophical inquiry, it might seem all the more unexpected to consider it in the context of film studies. Yet in this article, I propose that object agency not only deserves our attention but also fits fruitfully within the theoretical framework of object-oriented ontology (OOO) applied to film studies. When we factor object agency into our consideration of film, cinema itself becomes a metaphorical lens that draws our focus to various cinematic techniques—vibrant colour palettes, lighting, make-up, and other elements. Infusing a scene with agency is a way of highlighting and clarifying it. Thus, the presumed disjunction between object agency and film studies actually opens the door to rich metaphysical speculation, especially if we are willing to re-examine what cinema does best: animate objects and endow them with a sense of presence. Filmmakers achieve this through techniques such as dynamic camera movements, evocative lighting, or meticulous mise en scène. Take Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* (1980), in which the Overlook Hotel comes across as a living, almost breathing entity marked by an unsettling, malevolent agency (Olivier, 2020). Kubrick's use of sinister symmetry, haunting soundtrack, and shifting spatial dynamics invests the hotel with a palpable life of its own—showing us how film can extend beyond conventional representation to touch upon the essence of agency.

This is, of course, not simply a question of foregrounding objects. Research focusing on objects in cinema has already been carried out. Siegfried Kracauer (1960) underlined film's documentary function, noting that the frame confers no special privilege on human beings over inanimate things (p. 218). Likewise, André Bazin's idea of ontological realism is founded on the conviction that the cinematic image directly captures the very existence of objects. Bazin especially praised deep focus and the long take, arguing that these techniques allow objects and characters to appear simultaneously and with equal weight in a single shot. Erwin Panofsky (1947) similarly maintained that one of cinema's core traits is the 'dynamisation of space', whereby sets and props cease to

¹Object-Oriented Ontology (OOO) first took root in architectural discourse, yet its reach is edging ever further afield. Take Zora Poposki's reading of Hans Holbein's *The Ambassadors*: Though the painting seems to crystallise the Renaissance's unapologetically human-centred outlook, Poposki contends that it also gestures towards the autonomy of things and, more broadly, to a ramifying network of objects in which people are but one node (Poposki, 2024, p. 15). In a similar vein, Andrzej Marzec (2020) argues that the films of directors such as Quentin Dupieux and Peter Strickland cultivate a fresh cinematic idiom—one that allows objects to speak for their own modes of being rather than merely propping up human drama.



be a static backdrop and instead acquire movement and meaning. Yet none of these approaches tackles Jean Epstein's (2012) claim that cinema brings forth the feeling inherent in objects, granting them a reality that transcends everyday life—nor do they suggest that an object's essence can ever be fully revealed.

By placing objects as vital entities at the centre of film readings, I aim to transform object-oriented ontology into a theory of cinema. Although OOO has yet to engage film theory in any sustained conversation, Levi R. Bryant (2023) argues that science-fiction cinema is tailor-made for the job: few genres expose the independence—and the capacity for surprise—of things so vividly. Approaching a film through an OOO's methodology invites us to ask “What do the things do? How do they redraw the web of relations, and which unexpected communications spring from their presence?” Such questions, Bryant suggests, help audience and critics grasp the dramatic weight objects carry on-screen. In *The Mist* (2007), a creeping fog—and the creatures concealed within it—shatters the town's social bonds, forcing the survivors to rebuild their moral universe from scratch. Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002) strands John Anderton in a mesh of surveillance devices—iris scanners, advertising screens, spider-like drones—that repeatedly shuts down any avenue of escape. Jan Švankmajer's short film *Byt [The Flat]* (1968) prises open a drab apartment to reveal cutlery that revolts, doors that refuse to open, and physics gone delightfully awry; the everyday objects we normally *overlook* suddenly dictate the rules of the game. Yet, for all its insight, Bryant's brief essay stops short of tying these ontological claims to concrete questions of cinematic form—camera movement, framing, sound design, and so on. In that respect, Kubrick's *Overlook Hotel* would be an ideal test case: a building whose very architecture seems to think, remember, and scheme. Tracking how the hotel's corridors, carpets, and typewriters commandeer the film's grammar could push the dialogue between OOO and cinema further than a purely thematic reading ever could.

In this article, I adopt a concept-driven, fine-grained formal analysis whose theoretical pedigree lies in Graham Harman's object-oriented ontology and Levi R. Bryant's ontology. In my exposition, I focus on OOO's key terms—the divide between real and sensual objects, the notion of withdrawal, and the mechanism of vicarious causation. I begin by breaking *The Shining* into semantically meaningful sequences and, for each one, I systematically code camera movement, lens or focal length, diegetic and extra-diegetic sound layers, spatial layout, and editing transitions. Throughout the analysis I relate both the actions of the human characters—Jack, Wendy, and Danny—and the ways the hotel, the carpet, the typewriter, and even the doors become quasi-subjects to the theoretical vocabulary. When probing the interplay between objects—for instance, the relationship

the Overlook Hotel forges with Danny's "shine"—I ask how each object preserves its withdrawn aspect and which of its sensual qualities it brings to the table in the act of interaction. All the while, the discussion keeps up a dialogue with more established approaches in film studies. By briefly setting OOO alongside neo-formalist phenomenological film theory, and new materialist readings, I demonstrate how OOO can meaningfully enrich these perspectives. Finally, I read the findings in parallel with the theoretical framework to explore how the objects' withdrawn essences on screen are completed by a third object's (audience) ontological presence.

Approaches such as formalism and neo-formalism, which accord greater importance to objects in order to foreground their agency, are no longer sufficient in terms of objects; ontology, too, must be brought into the discussion. My central claim is that the *mise en scène* and metaphors of *The Shining* secure its theatrical impact only when the real object—initially withdrawn in the *mise en scène*—is completed by another real object: the audience. The Overlook, the carpets and the ever-present typewriter withdraw into what object-oriented ontology calls their *real* status: they withhold the plenitude of their being, offering instead a set of shifting, merely *sensual* façades. Those façades, however, are fragile. They flicker into coherence only when a second real object, the audience, appropriates them, organises them, and, crucially, bears the excess that the film itself cannot stage. In this sense, the spectator is neither an external interpreter nor a passive recipient, but the very locus where Kubrick's metaphors complete their detour from the withdrawn to the manifest. The spectacle, then, is doubly theatrical: first in the meticulous arrangement of halls, mirrors and Steadicam glides, and again in the darkened auditorium where those elements are re-animated, vicariously, by the audience's own ontological heft.

More Than Just a Setting

The Overlook Hotel stands out as a memorable icon in our memory, having been featured in countless moments of popular culture, myths, and conspiracy theories alike. In fact, film critic Dale Schneck (1980) famously remarked: "The real star of *The Shining* is the set of the Overlook Hotel" (p. 49). Indeed, the carefully designed sets and haunting visuals of *The Shining* have imprinted themselves on the hearts and minds of horror film lovers worldwide. From the very start, the film repeatedly shows us these establishing shots culminate in the first on-screen character or object: the Overlook Hotel itself. Understanding how space is presented in a scene offers vital context for the audience. In this instance, each shot in the opening sequence employs a panning movement, making it difficult for the audience to perceive the film's broader meaning so early (Luckhurst, 2013, p. 7). Yet one way the film hints at its horror leanings is via its non-diegetic soundtrack, which contributes a palpable air of mystery and a terrifying vitality that may even

seem incongruous with the otherwise scenic shots (McQuiston, 2013, p. 72).² For instance, you can hear a motif reminiscent of an Indigenous rallying cry woven into the soundtrack—an element that, although peculiar at first, serves the film’s underlying narrative, pointing to the notion that the story’s antagonistic forces are only revealed gradually, and that the hotel’s isolation is doubly emphasised by its remoteness.

Since the film is now an instant classic, I give a very short summary for those who have not seen it yet. The narrative of the film mostly follows Jack Torrance, an aspiring writer and recovering alcoholic, who takes a job as the winter caretaker of the Overlook Hotel. He settles in with his wife, Wendy, and his young son, Danny—who possesses a psychic ability known as ‘shining.’ Tensions rise as the hotel’s haunting legacy collides with Jack’s unravelling sanity, culminating in a notorious, chilling finale. At one point, Danny asks Tony (an embodiment of his psychic power or imaginary friend) about the Overlook Hotel, and a grisly vision unfolds: a river of blood flows onto the screen, directly towards the audience. Though we are all inundated with myriad images day in and day out, some images nourish us differently, functioning as instruments of memory and generating layered narratives. Thus, if every object is believed to carry its own notion or symbolise its own concept, even a simple story can be remembered and retold through unexpected twists. The key is placing these images in familiar spaces—a mnemonic approach also known as memory placement. Cinema’s power lies in making the invisible visible through the tangible presence of objects on the screen. As Hallorann tells Danny, “When something happens, it can leave a trace of itself behind, say, like, if someone burns toast. Well, maybe things that happened leave other kind of traces behind—not things that anyone can notice, but things that people who shine can see.”

Right from the beginning, Danny sees frightening visions, and the overhead shots that follow the road to the hotel give the film a gloomy, unsettling feel. He experiences an uncanny dread and a speechless terror that lurk behind day-to-day life with his family—emotions that he cannot easily tell. Forced to bear psychic sensations well beyond his years, Danny is acutely aware of the sinister past of the Overlook, long before he treads its spectral corridors. In fact, the imposing hotel can be seen as a monument to shame, saturated with violent acts that underpin the foundations of a nation. Acknowledging such horrors is no small feat. Thus, we might regard *The Shining* not only as a landmark horror film but also as a deeper critique of history that resonates with half-forgotten,

²Jane Bennett defines vitality as follows: “By *vitality* I mean the capacity of things edibles, commodities, storms, metals—not only to impede or block the will and designs of humans but also to act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities, or tendencies of their own” (Bennett, 2009, p. 8). The hotel clings to entities that interact with it, especially those that *shine*. Timothy Morton (2013) quotes William Wordsworth to describe this sensation as follows: “As he rows away from a mountain, it seems for a while to loom ever larger in his field of vision, as if it were pursuing him, due to a strange parallax effect in which more of a suitably massive object is revealed as one goes farther away from it” (Morton, 2013, p. 52). The more the Torrance family tries to distance themselves emotionally or physically from the hotel’s sinister aura, the more intense and insistent its grip becomes.



silent memories, echoing like a ‘hive of angry bees.’ Even from the outset, when Jack steps into the manager’s office, we spot a Native American image on the left (03:29–03:37). Similar symbols adorn the curtains, the coffee mug on the principal’s desk, and various artefacts. As Bill Blakemore (1987) argues, *The Shining* openly critiques the genocide of Native Americans, embedding their imagery into nearly every shot, line, or sound (p. 58). Blakemore also emphasises that the hotel’s name implies the way the United States has ‘overlooked’ these atrocities. Herein lies the puzzle: the past is often an enigma, invisible and mislaid, which is precisely why the hotel is called the ‘Overlook.’ A tapestry and the blood spilling from the elevator both convey a disturbing reality—a narrative of devastation and a dire warning to those who dare inhabit this place.

However, the film is not solely a critique of consumer society or an indictment of genocide. By ascribing overly human emotions and psychological states to images, one risks ‘overlooking’ their concrete, material, or ontological features. Despite what you might think, psychic abilities (were they to exist)—including telepathy, telekinesis, and precognition—are morally neutral. They can be used for good or ill. This is something Hallorann clarifies for Danny, stressing that ‘shining’ can serve benevolent ends. Yet in Danny’s case, shining exposes him to dark emotions, latent family tensions, and the lingering energies of horrific episodes at the Overlook. Moreover, some locations may indeed harbour their own form of life—a vitality not necessarily equivalent to human consciousness (Trigg, 2015). In Stephen King’s fictional universe, *Rose Red* (2002) is just such a place. It is described as ‘born bad,’ and many suspect that certain lands themselves—like that under *Rose Red*—are inherently tainted, driving individuals to the brink. The Overlook belongs to that same class. If a malign consciousness exists, it was present even before construction began; it was in the land. The presence of characters like Danny, who effectively provide the psychic electricity, animates such haunted locations, a bit like sending currents through a deceased frog’s muscles and seeing them twitch. Here, the Overlook, half-alive already, leaps far beyond a mere twitch. It devours Danny’s energy.

Overlook Hotel and Object-Oriented Ontology

Before we dive into how this relationship might be addressed in a film analysis, let’s first consider how it is even possible in the first place. Object-oriented ontology is a philosophical stance that attributes equal ontological status to all objects. Elsaesser and Hagener (2015) introduce OOO as a “return to things,” saying that: “Inspired by [Martin] Heidegger and staunchly anti-Kantian in its thrust, these schools of thought try to take seriously the objects, the matter, the entities that surround us in their diversity” (p. 210). Meanwhile, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (2012) describes OOO as a non-anthropocentric philosophy in which “things possess agency, autonomy,

and ultimate mystery” (p. 407). For Harman, an object is something that cannot be entirely reduced to its components or to its effects on other entities (Harman, 2017, p. 43). One can also glean the following from this definition: anything that can be considered on its own counts as an object. After all, if we don’t reduce a thing to its components or its effects, we either end up with nothing whatsoever or we’re left with something—and that ‘something’ is what we call an object; in other words, it’s a thing that can stand on its own. A primary motivation is to avoid correlationism, which, in brief, is the idea that we cannot speak about the world without referring to humans, nor can we speak about humans without referring to the world, so that we can only ever discuss the correlation between the two (Meillassoux, 2008, pp. 9–10; Young, 2020, p. 43; Birks, 2021, p. 71).

According to Graham Harman, there is a profound tension between an object and its qualities. The bundle theory—which views an object as merely the sum of its qualities—proves inadequate for explaining this tension. Harman suggests that an object cannot simply be reduced to its qualities and that there is a ‘fixed’ essence in the mix (Harman, 2017, p. 76). Departing from the traditional Husserlian interpretation and taking inspiration from José Ortega y Gasset, Harman turns his attention to Immanuel Kant’s distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal. According to Harman, José Ortega y Gasset takes Kant’s well-known distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal, traditionally confined to ethics, and extends it intriguingly into the domain of aesthetics. Starting from Kant’s ethical imperative—that one should treat others as ends in themselves rather than mere means—Gasset expands this principle to aesthetic experience. In his view, the interiority of things is their noumenal side, what he terms the self, which does not have to be conscious or personal but simply an inward essence. Thus, the self can apply to any entity, not just human beings. Instrumentalising or reducing objects merely to their external, phenomenal properties is to overlook this inwardness. Gasset argues that metaphor provides a glimpse into this inner aspect—not by direct access, but by offering a tantalising suggestion of its existence. Harman appreciates Gasset’s effort but criticises him for assuming that metaphorical relationships are symmetrical, whereas Harman insists these relationships are inherently asymmetrical, marked by a tension between an object’s withdrawn reality and its apparent qualities (Harman, 2017, p. 78). In a metaphorical context, the statement “A is like B” does not convey the same meaning as “B is like A”. For instance, there is a clear difference between saying “The blue in my eyes is the sea’s tears.” and “The sea’s tears is the blue in my eyes.” According to Harman, this difference shows that metaphor does not set up a symmetrical relation but instead creates a new object—a new domain of meaning. Therefore, although Harman largely adopts Gasset’s expansion, he highlights the asymmetry at play in metaphor, carving out his own distinct stance in the process.

If the metaphor were symmetrical, objects would lose their autonomy and be reduced solely to mutual referential relations or interchangeable perceptions. Instead, the inherent imbalance between the metaphor's components suggests that each object has a withdrawn reality that resists complete capture by perception or language. Therefore, what Harman implicitly emphasises by stressing this asymmetry is the independence and irreducibility of objects themselves. Objects do not merely exist as reflections of one another; they persist independently, each with a unique, irreducible reality (Harman, 2017, p. 43). Metaphor, then, is not simply a poetic flourish but a mechanism by which aesthetic discourse resists reductionism, maintaining the tension between objects and their qualities, and thereby preserving their ontological autonomy. This move is crucial because it allows the film critic to regard the elements of *mise en scène* not just as passive reflections of narrative or symbolic meaning, but as autonomous entities with their own independent existence, significance, and influence. It calls attention to the limits of traditional cinematic interpretation, where props, settings, and cinematographic elements are often subordinated entirely to narrative or characterisation. Harman's concept of objects as having withdrawn realities, which exceed or escape immediate perception, suggests that films—particularly those that rely on ambiguity, such as Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*—deliberately exploit this ontological tension. The film's objects (such as Overlook Hotel, its hallways, carpets, and typewriter) resist complete interpretation, continually withdrawing into their own hidden essences. Audiences engage precisely because they sense that there is something deeper to these objects, something that remains beyond their grasp. Therefore, the tension between visible appearances and hidden meanings, between the film's surface and its elusive depth, can be better comprehended through Harman's ontological lens.

If we allow that an object's untranslatable dimension is akin to a parapsychic capacity, why not consider the audience as also possessing a psychic side of sorts? In Danny's vision, the blood pours out of the screen, as though flooding towards the audience. Since no physical entity in the *mise en scène* represents the violent history of the hotel, the audience stands in its place. We get the impression that we are stealing a quick peek at its internal side. The recurring vision of an elevator gushing blood can be seen as one of the key appearances of real American ghosts—the suppressed past bursting forth (Hill, 2021, p. 530; Naremore, 2007, p. 193). The red torrent breaches tightly shut elevator doors framed by Native American motifs, silently spattering its crimson tide. It is a horrifying reminder of the bloodshed upon which the nation, and the Overlook itself, were founded. From the elevator's perspective, it's almost as though the past, long buried and glossed over, cannot be contained any longer and is now seeping back into our present. Consequently, the elevator's flood of blood metamorphoses into something more than mere fake gore. It symbolises

real events. It has become a real object, with sensual properties that are simultaneously supported by another real object: the audience. Indeed, when the film shows us the river of blood, it is offering an analogy brimming with infinite sensual qualities. The blood is thereby transformed into a 'sensual object' existing in tension with its underlying reality. In Harman's words, all objects possess infinite qualities, and we interact with only a subset in our immediate experience:

"It follows from the insights of phenomenology that for every object there is always a tension between that object and its own qualities: "tension" meaning that the object both has and does not have those qualities, since within certain vaguely defined limits the object can exchange its current qualities for others. In the normal case of sensual objects, a tree can have countless different properties depending on how and from what angle and distance we confront it, and both the sensual tree and its sensual qualities are confronted directly in experience." (Harman, 2020, p. 68)

When this object in the film withdraws, the only real object still present is the audience, which steps in to host its qualities. In that sense, we—the audience—complete the metaphor, bridging the gap left by the filmic object's inaccessibility. One might say that it's impossible to speak of art without an audience, because art demands that its perceivers do the work of the absent object. In short, film is teeming with metaphors and *mise en scène*, generating new objects in the minds of its audience. Because these objects exceed the purely literal, film criticism must accept that objects are steeped in mystery, and we can only engage indirectly with what they truly are. In summary, Harman's theory develops into a broader aesthetic philosophy. Within OOO, the Overlook Hotel is both a real object and a sensual one. Real objects persist independently, even if they are not acting upon anything right now (just as a rock still exists outside the Overlook's immediate influence). By contrast, sensual objects spring forth from interactions between real objects, which is especially pertinent to the Overlook. How, though, do real objects interact with one another if, per OOO, they never make direct contact? Vicarious mediation steps in, which is what Harman terms "vicarious causation" (Bryant, 2010; Harman, 2012, p. 188). We only grasp any object with the help of another mediator. Hence, in this case, the Overlook Hotel's interactions are mediated by certain visitors or staff with 'the shining.' Those are the people upon whom it feeds.

During an aesthetic experience, the real object vanishes, its qualities scatter, and the audience organises them into a new object. This is somewhat analogous to endosymbiosis in biology, whereby evolution emerges from the fusing of two previously independent organisms that merge into a single new living entity. Within the cells of every human being, there are components that originally began as external intruders but have become indispensable to our survival (Harman,

2017, p. 112). The reason for this parallel is that human experience is always sensual rather than sensible: we sense, rather than rationally deduce, the full reality of things. And within the sensual realm, OOO emphasises two distinctions. The first is between objects and their qualities; the second is between medium and mediator. Our medium might be a particular historical era or a specific technological environment. Our mediators are the objects we interact with in order to establish contact with the real. The aesthetic experience, whether found in painting or cinema, plays with this scenario by revealing the gap between an object's presence and its qualities:

“Either we encounter a mere object with literal qualities, in which case it is simply not something aesthetic, or we are made to perform the work of an absent object that we have been convinced is missing, in which case we do have an aesthetic experience.” (Harman, 2020, p. 140)

To illustrate, consider one of Harman's examples from *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything*: Homer's metaphor of the “wine-dark sea.” According to Harman, this metaphor is not merely saying that the sea is as dark as wine. It suggests that the sea also carries some of wine's other qualities—its capacity for intoxication, danger, and that sense of losing control (Harman, 2017, p. 83). By employing “wine-dark” rather than “dark blue,” Homer imbues the sea with qualities it normally doesn't have. All metaphors, as Harman notes, split an object from its usual attributes and relocate those attributes into an unexpected context. And such metaphors are not reversible: “wine-dark sea” and “sea-dark wine” are completely different, each forging separate tensions between objects and qualities. In short, the usual representation of “sea” is suspended and made strange. The real object “sea” withdraws, requiring the only real object left—the perceiver—to step in and hold onto the sea's new qualities (Harman, 2017, p. 82–83). Another feature that highlights the Overlook's agency is the presence of so-called ghosts, all of which cast reflections on doors, mirrors, or on floors. But are not these reflections ghosts as well? And if not, what on earth might they be? Consider how Danny, in the Games Room, sees the twins' reflections on the door (14:30). Kubrick is famous for his precision and symmetry, so this is very unlikely to be a casual oversight. These apparitions may be read as manifestations of the Overlook's presence. Their emergence after Danny arrives underscores how he provides the psychic energy the hotel is hungry for—an invisible but very real kind of life force.

Yet there is an additional detail that underscores the Overlook's liveliness and its deceptive maze-like character. When Wendy, Danny, and Hallorann are touring the kitchen, they step into the freezer that houses the meat (16:08). We see a special area for cooks near the door they enter. Hallorann promptly lists the enormous stocks of food—dozens of turkeys, steaks, roasts, and so on. However, the moment they exit (16:39), the background has changed completely. Rather than

emerging back into the cook's area, they stand at the exit structure. Even if this were a continuity error, it fosters a distinct impression that the hotel is toying with spatial consistency, growing ever more labyrinthine and untrustworthy. Meanwhile, Ullman explains that the hotel was constructed on what was once believed to be a Native American burial ground, requiring builders to fight off the occasional attack. Immediately after this, the film introduces the snowcat (15:30)—a vehicle crucial to Wendy and Danny's eventual escape. During these scenes, lateral tracking shots give the feeling that the hotel itself is watching the newcomers. Kubrick masterfully translated onto the screen those fleeting instances where an object or an experience suddenly takes the reins and propels the action. Another vital secret behind his success is the deft use of editing—indeed, Vsevolod Pudovkin's approach to editing remains one of Kubrick's golden rules:

“The foundation of film art is editing. [...] The film is not shot, but built, built up from the separate strips of celluloid that are its raw material. Things recorded by the camera, Pudovkin said, were only so many dead objects: The man photographed is only raw material for the future composition of his image in the film, arranged in editing.” (Luckhurst, 2013, p. 37)

Kubrick's particular liking for wide-angle lenses amplifies that sense of the Overlook's watchfulness, though he had to hold the camera perfectly level to avoid distortion. His famously painstaking approach is reminiscent of a medieval craftsman labouring over every detail until the image matches his imagination. Moreover, Kubrick demanded a shooting ratio of 102-to-1 (whereas a typical film might use 5:1 or 15:1), and he emphasised low camera angles when filming Danny on his bicycle so that we would inhabit the child's point of view (Mather, p. 209).³ He also embraced the then-new Steadicam technology, remarking, “It's like a magic carpet. The fast, flowing camera movements in the maze would have been impossible to do without the Steadicam” (Gallese and Guerra, 2020, p. 101). In effect, the Steadicam shots, the wide angles, the careful mise en scène, the seamless editing, and the unnerving soundtrack all conspire to help viewers construct dazzling “artful objects” (Warner, 2019, p. 129). Although some early critics were a bit sceptical, *The Shining* aged like a fine wine, maturing in the cultural memory. As The New York Times succinctly put it in 1993: “In some eerie fashion, it gets better every year” (Luckhurst, 2013, p. 8). These stylistic elements vividly convey Harman's notion of objects as entities with independent existence, whose deeper qualities always elude complete comprehension. Indeed, through these techniques, Kubrick transforms cinematic objects into powerful actors in their own right, entities capable of exerting influence beyond their immediate qualities.

³Since the camera is positioned as a technological subject in the film, it becomes an eye that guides the audience around the hotel (Sunderland, 2013).



Objects, Forms, and Experiences

OOO is, of course, hardly the first theoretical approach to insist that form and object matter; yet it nudges the debate a decisive step further. Earlier schools, neo-formalism and Herbert Zettl's applied media aesthetics chief among them, already scrutinise how a film's formal elements mould the audience's experience, opening the door to the thought that objects might count as autonomous entities. At this point the two camps converge and both fix their gaze on the film's concrete, material side, stressing the significance of objects ranging from props and décor to lighting and sound. Neo-formalism, however, tends to treat these constituents as devices that steer perception, whereas OOO maintains that each possesses its own ontological heft. Here the paths begin to diverge. Neo-formalists ask, in effect, 'What does this element do to the audience?'; OOO retorts, 'What does it do full stop, not only to viewers but also to the other objects with which it interacts?' Put differently, OOO displaces Bordwell and Thompson's familiar paradigm of "contribution to narrative" by foregrounding the object's withdrawn, in-itself dimension—an aspect that eludes any merely human accounting. For OOO, the chandelier does not exist merely to cast an ominous glow over the ballroom; it also enters into alliances and stand-offs with dust, gravity, and passing drafts, weaving networks that do not terminate at the spectator's retina. A similar tension surfaces when Zettl's emphasis on sensuous experience meets OOO's principles of withdrawal and self-sufficiency. Zettl, in the last analysis, grants priority to the perceiving subject: the shot's colour palette works because it elicits emotional resonance (Zettl, 2011, pp. 74–76). OOO, by contrast, levels the playing field, insisting that every component (camera, curtain, cigarette smoke) enjoys an existence that is meaningful even when no one is looking. This is a bracing reminder, if one were needed, that cinema is not just a mirror held up to the human condition but a menagerie of recalcitrant things, each carrying on in its own obstinate fashion.

On the other hand, phenomenological film theory treats the cinematic encounter as a bodily lived experience and, up to a point, finds common ground with OOO, for both schools ultimately urge us to pull the camera back and broaden the frame. Drawing on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's notion of the 'living body,' Vivian Sobchack (2004) recasts the audience as a subject who thinks and feels through flesh, rather than a disembodied mind merely housed in it. For her, movie-going is a two-way exchange: the eyes operate like fingertips, so that the screen is at once something that touches and is touched (p. 63). The viewing body is therefore both sensible and sentient—what Sobchack (2004) calls an "embodied intelligence" in which cognition and sensation dovetail (p. 84). This stance flies in the face of older film theory, which tended to seat the audience passively in front of an image stripped down to the purely optical. Laura Marks advances almost an erotic

idea with her notion of *haptic visuality*, an aesthetic in which sight bleeds into touch. Blurred, grainy shots without a clear subject make us feel the picture instead of just looking at it. In such moments, Marks suggests, viewers half-imagine a picture's texture, warmth, or weight; the very blur or blank space on screen reaches out to other senses, summoning memories and associations that conventional, sharply defined imagery would leave dormant (Marks, 2000, pp. 162–163). Phenomenological theorists frequently note that cinema smudges the line between thinking and feeling. Tarja Laine makes a similar point. Watching a film, she argues, is an unpremeditated act of meaning-making carried out through emotion. In *Feeling Cinema* she proposes a shift in method: instead of standing outside the work and assigning it significance, we forge meaning with the film (Laine, 2011, p. 7). To understand a picture, then, is not to parse it as a neutral text but to enter into an affective dialogue—sharing its pulse, breathing its atmosphere, participating in a lived encounter.

Both OOO and phenomenological affect theory offer an alternative to approaches that treat cinema as nothing more than a system of signs and messages. By foregrounding film's material, sensuous dimension, each line of thought draws attention to what actually enriches the viewing experience. Yet crucial philosophical differences remain—chiefly over the status of subject and object. For phenomenological theorists, meaning arises in the encounter between spectator–subject and film–object; a film acquires significance only insofar as it is lived within the spectator's field of consciousness. OOO, by contrast, treats meaning itself as part of ontology and refuses to accord any special status to the subject–object split. From this angle, audience and film are simply two distinct entities—one a human object, the other a cinematic object—entering into interaction while retaining their own autonomous realities. The audience apprehends certain sensory qualities, the film impresses various affects upon the viewer, yet the film continues to exist whether or not anyone is watching. Phenomenology thus regards a film's being as inseparable from its appearance in lived experience, whereas OOO rejects that correlationist stance and insists on the film's independence from the audience. In short, phenomenology focuses on how a film shows itself; OOO on the fact that it *is*—and remains—regardless of who looks.

Another point of divergence lies in how the two camps treat representation and meaning. Some phenomenological theorists, reacting against the abstractions of semiotic-psychoanalytic film theory, seek meaning not in systems of signs but in bodily intuition and intersubjective encounter. OOO creates a deeper critique because every act of representation reveals only one face of an object and can never grasp it in full. Accordingly, an OOO turns to a film's intrinsic properties and to the relations it strikes up with other things. In this respect it converges with Marks's and Sobchack's

insistence on colour, texture and camera movement—all concrete features that register first of all in the body. OOO, however, tries to consider those features without falling back on human experience as the final court of appeal. Even so, a fruitful middle ground is emerging where phenomenology and OOO can converse—namely in new materialism and relational aesthetics. Recent work in film theory often brings body-centred phenomenology into dialogue with post-human thought, expanding the notion of body to include technological extensions and environmental forces as well as flesh-and-blood humanity. Hermeneutically, the stance is synthetic rather than adversarial. Neo-formalism and phenomenological affect theory are treated not as straw targets but as interlocutors; their insights are retained wherever they illuminate the film’s sensuous textures or perceptual rhythms. Nonetheless, by insisting on the autonomy of cinematic things, the present approach seeks to press beyond interpretations that ultimately yoke every prop and palette to human meaning-making alone. The argument may be falsified empirically (if the formal evidence contradicts the proposed object relations) or conceptually, should OOO’s tenets prove inapposite to questions of cinematic agency.

The Limits and Possibilities of Object-Oriented Film Philosophy

Object-oriented philosophy widens the scope of what we call a figure, inviting us to treat everything that appears on screen as a figure in its own right and, in so doing, to sidestep the familiar subject–object split that has long haunted film theory. Conventional approaches still home in on the human protagonist, pushing chairs, lamps, or camera rigs to the margins as mere scenery or tools. OOO, by contrast, insists that we venture beyond the plane of expression—language, meaning, signs—and give equal weight to whatever lies outside the frame (Bolšakovas, 2024). Where semiotics tracks chains of signification, machinic assemblages ask how entities rub up against one another. Think, for instance, of the opening of *The Shining*: the camera drifts over mountains and forest as though it were Nature itself doing the looking (Bryant, 2010). The sequence flatly contradicts Edmund Husserl’s and Merleau-Ponty’s body-bound models of perception. More generally, cinema can leap from the yawning vastness of the cosmos to the crawl-space of the microscopic in a single cut, unsettling any body-centred sense of experience. From an OOO standpoint, such moments oblige us to foreground not only the vistas on display but also the kit that makes them possible—the helicopter rig, the motorised mount, the lens that bends light just so. These things, once switched on, conjure a vantage point that owes nothing to flesh and bone. The film’s inhuman gaze, then, arises precisely because its machines are up and running.

Recent scholarship, however, often skates over the blind spots of OOO, especially when the object of study is cinema—a medium stitched together through human choices at every stage.



The foremost sticking-point is the role of human agency: a film's framing, cutting and colour grading all hinge on people. Do objects truly see? Can a camera possess its own viewpoint, or does every perspective ultimately belong to the person wielding it? And when OOO speaks of relations between objects and their qualities, is that relation assessed from the outside, or from within the very nexus that is doing the relating? (Taxier, 2020, p. 601). Even Graham Harman, at present, suggests that film is a hot medium because each scene's framing is predetermined: there are no truly autonomous objects or multiple angles for us to freely choose. Every time we see Humphrey Bogart, we see him from the same vantage, with no variation (Harman, 2020, p. 178). Answering such questions means returning to OOO's founding premises. For Harman, human experience is not the privileged perch from which the universe is surveyed; indeed, no relation—whether between persons, rocks or radio signals—ever exhausts the object it encounters (Harman, 2002, p. 5; 2017, p. 181; 2020, p. 68). Likewise, when the Overlook Hotel resurrects ghosts of the past, it does not apprehend them in their full complexity. The colour of the walls, the smell of visitors, the feel of the carpet, even the hotel's room rates—all these traits are surplus to what the building notices. In any exchange, an object discloses only those facets another entity can register, offering a local, selective manifestation of itself (Bryant, 2011, p. 31). Perspective, then, is not a uniquely human state of consciousness; it is a structural feature of reality. Every encounter reduces the partners to caricatures of their deeper essence (Harman, 2017, p. 9). Rather than positing a yawning ontological distance between people and things, OOO contends that both labour under the same built-in limitation whenever they grapple with the world.

An object, Levi R. Bryant argues, is not simply the sum of its external ties; it harbours a virtual proper being—a store of latent capacities—that surfaces only as local manifestations when it collides with other things (Bryant, 2011, pp. 30–31; 2014, p. 40). The claim parallels Graham Harman's notion of withdrawal: in every encounter a thing discloses some traits while holding others in reserve, so no single gaze can exhaust its reality. Bryant illustrates the idea with a polystyrene coffee cup. Lower the cup several hundred metres into the ocean and the pressure crushes it. Under those conditions the cup unveils a property—compressibility—that everyday use keeps hidden. The same artefact, in short, presents different faces in different milieus (Bryant, 2010). In ontological terms, perspective means that each entity reveals a selective profile to whatever it meets, concealing the rest (Bryant, 2011, p. 31). Every encounter is therefore an exchange of partial caricatures (Harman, 2017, p. 100). This is relational ontology—but only up to a point, because Bryant also insists on an irreducible core that persists beyond any relation (Bryant, 2011, pp. 170–71). The rainbow of perspectives is possible precisely because each object carries a reservoir of potential qualities that need no witness to exist. Bryant's ontological stance is therefore clear:



perspectives are local, plural and shaped by the internal make-up of each entity. One need not posit a human-style subject to speak of them; anything that both affects and is affected within a web of relations fashions a world of its own (Bryant, 2011, pp. 170–71). OOO thus redefines viewpoint as relational yet non-subjective: an event of interaction rather than a privilege of consciousness.

Dziga Vertov's (1984) *Kino-Eye* manifesto already lionised the camera as an autonomous eye—an optical device that vaults over the limits of ordinary sight. By treating the lens as a stand-in for the human eye, Vertov implied that the camera is itself a perceptual agent, it can roam through space at will, warp time through slow and fast motion, and in doing so disclose a world we could never grasp unaided. Lens distortion, film-stock (or sensor) sensitivity and the fixed cadence of the shutter all mean the machine sees in ways our retinas cannot. Brenton J. Malin (2021) makes a similar claim, arguing that unusual camera placements embody an object-oriented aesthetics.⁴ The Catalan director Albert Serra goes further: he wants the camera to reveal what the naked eye misses, and he dismisses film-makers who watch the monitor during a take—treating the lens as a mere prosthesis of their own vision—as guilty of “tautology” (Goi, 2023). For Serra, once the camera is forced to overlap with human sight, it squanders its singular power. Yet it is a human hand that chooses the footage the camera has captured, splices it together and turns it into a coherent viewpoint. Does that fact mean a truly subject-free perspective is impossible?

Object-oriented ontology offers a two-part answer. First, the raw image the camera records is produced, in part, independently of anyone's intentions. Set the camera on the ground, press record, walk away, and it will keep registering whatever drifts across its frame, bound only by its own optical and mechanical limits. It sees and leaves an inscription even when no one is looking. Second, when that raw material is shaped into something an audience can watch, a human intelligence certainly steps in—but the resulting perspective is a joint creation of person and machine. The striking angles in Vertov's films, for example, owe as much to cranes, lenses and film stock as to creative inspiration. OOO therefore counts the camera and its attendant gear as full-fledged actants. To speak of a camera's point of view is, from this angle, a legitimate shorthand, because a viewpoint is never the emanation of a lone consciousness; it crystallises out of an entire network of relations. Graham Harman and Levi R. Bryant emphasise that, although objects remain closed boxes, the instant they interact they throw off fleeting, phenomenal façades of one another. Those façades are, in effect, their viewpoints: to fire, cotton shows up as nothing but fuel (Harman, 2020, p. 20); to a bat, the world resolves into echo-maps; to a camera, it dissolves into pixels framed by

⁴Bob Ryan and Alison Price (2022) likewise argue that the camera, unlike the typical forms of human perception, freezes the continuous flow of time into a single instant, translates three-dimensional experience onto a two-dimensional surface, and carries no a priori intention or interpretive layer (pp. 137–38). In their view, then, the camera is more than a mimesis device: by minimising the space-time schema, it discreetly offers us hidden noumenal clues.



glass. At no stage do OOO thinkers simply anthropomorphise things; on the contrary, they treat human consciousness as a highly specialised—perhaps baroque—variation on the same relational business that binds every entity to every other. Even so, the question of how OOO might finally dissolve the subject–object divide in debates over cinematic perspective remains open—and calls for further work.

At the centre of film theory, the dialectical relationship between reality and appearance—interwoven with the moving image’s temporal and spatial dimensions—confines any strictly ontological approach (Arsenjuk, 2016). OOO’s notion of the withdrawal of objects does not so much exclude transformation and historicity as call on us to grasp them in a different key. Because an object is never wholly exhausted by its relations, each new encounter can activate hitherto unseen aspects. Shielded by this withdrawn depth, an object may register only superficial alterations through minor interactions, while deeper, structural forces can effect lasting transformations in its reality. Moreover, objects generate their own temporality. Classical film theory has generally centred on the problem of the image’s relation to reality. André Bazin, for instance, claimed that the photographic image leaves a trace of the real, whereas formalist theorists viewed the image as essentially constructed and illusory (Bazin, 2004, p. 10). Yet the cinematic image possesses an ontological density that exceeds its visible properties. Alongside the image’s bodily or phenomenological impact, the audience also touches a reality that the image itself cannot fully capture but nonetheless intimates. Thus the relation between cinema and visible reality operates on more than the familiar axis of representation versus illusion; the image functions with at least two strata, the manifest and the withdrawn. In this sense, certain qualities of the object can be lifted from their customary unity and reassembled on another plane, and this new constellation hints at the object’s hidden dimension.

Conclusion

OOO provides a potent framework for understanding how objects—both animate and inanimate—relate to one another within a cinematic frame. This perspective expands our appreciation for how agency is attributed to objects in a film, not solely because humans interact with them, but because these objects possess their own inherent qualities, existing in relational networks with other objects and with the audience. If we grant the central claim of object-oriented ontology—that each entity harbours a withdrawn core irreducible to its relations—then anything that slips into the film frame, whether a sliver of light or the sweep of a Steadicam, warrants the same ontological gravity as Jack Torrance and his family. When you look at cameras, sets, metaphors, and so on, it becomes clear that they are more than inert props waiting for human intention; they transform,



manipulate, and reinterpret meaning on their own terms. Nonetheless, a persistent assumption in some strains of film criticism is that objects do not speak unless we interpret them as a kind of meta-language. An essential premise in an object-oriented reading of film is that aesthetic language creates new objects. Indeed, even the audience occupies the position of a mediating object, since it is never fully in control. Cinema, by its very nature, links audience to the aesthetic object, forging a novel composite entity—one that overcomes our inability to access the object's core by compensating for the object's partial withdrawal. When we watch a film, we effectively become part of the aesthetic object, standing in for whatever has receded in Heideggerian fashion. Objects emerge from the interplay of their roles as parts of a coherent structure and the potential qualities they hold. As I worked through *The Shining* scene by scene, I hunted for that withdrawn core not in the overt drama but along the fault-lines of the *mise en scène* itself; in the process, I spliced neo-formalism's device-function logic with OOO's real/sensual object divide.

To begin with, the idea that the Overlook Hotel slips its role as mere backdrop and behaves like an active agent gives cinematic flesh to OOO's principle of object autonomy. No thing ever lays itself completely bare; hence the Overlook offers only a set of sensuous, metaphor-laden qualities while keeping its substance in reserve. Film analysis—and, by extension, the audience's encounter—steps in at this gap, fleshing out the hotel with the attributes it stubbornly withholds. The aesthetic objects in the film function as intermediaries, conveying the sensory qualities of real objects to the audience (Bolšakovas, 2024, p. 3–4). In this sense, the audience effectively replaces the withdrawn real object in the *mise en scène*, thereby forming a third object. Consequently, metaphors and *mise en scènes* acquire a two-stage structure through this reciprocal interaction between the intra-diegetic objects and the viewer: in the first stage, the production team's technical choices render the objects sensuously salient; in the second, the spectator relates these sensory data to their own cognitive schemata, thereby unveiling the objects' latent ontological dimension. The film foregrounds the ontological weight of objects by exposing this tension through Steadicam drifts, lens choices, spatial discontinuities, and auditory motifs. In doing so, it unsettles cinema's anthropocentric frame of perception.

However, bringing this ontological expansion into film theory does more than place objects at the centre of the scene; it also opens a critical dialogue with neo-formalism, phenomenological film theory and new materialist readings. Whereas neo-formalism (Bordwell and Thompson) treats objects as devices that steer perception, object-oriented ontology underscores that these devices persist as withdrawn wholes beyond human experience. In a similar vein, Vivian Sobchack's and Laura Marks's body- and affect-centred approaches echo OOO's principle of object autonomy,



yet they may not fully overcome the object–subject divide, for in OOO meaning is rooted not in the subject’s experience but in the ontological fabric of being. Accordingly, this study proposes an intermediate, perhaps shifting yet fertile, space between object phenomenology and object ontology. Of course, removing human agency entirely is neither possible nor desirable; editing decisions, montage, and perceptual emphases still arise from human hands. Even so, the filmic world that emerges results from the joint labour of apparatuses—lenses, cranes, Steadicams—and extra-diegetic forces such as light, air currents, and gravity. At this point object-oriented ontology classifies the camera, the loudspeaker, and even empty spaces as autonomous actors, freeing perspective from its status as an exclusive privilege of human consciousness. Cinema therefore renders perceptible a mesh of more-than-human relations, as new materialist discourse also observes, yet OOO’s distinctive contribution is to frame these relations not as fleeting perceptual effects but as enduring ontological tensions.

In light of these findings, a three-pronged research programme could deepen the debate on object agency within film studies: (1) broadening the formal itinerary by investigating how cinematic languages, from long takes to colour palettes, modulate the objective existence of things; (2) encouraging theoretical plurality by cross-reading object-oriented ontology with phenomenological film approaches and new materialism in order to develop a shared conceptual toolkit; and (3) providing historical contextualisation by relating the ontological claims of object-centred readings to production circumstances, technological shifts and audience practices. OOO gains an empirical foothold, while film scholarship inherits a fresh sense of ontological depth. Naturally, new questions crop up. In a post-cinema landscape where AI-driven virtual cameras roam digital sets, do objects still retain a hidden core, or does simulation flatten everything into code? And how does vicarious causation operate when viewers experience a work through telepresence rather than bodily immersion? In the end every corridor of the Overlook doubles as a passage into theory: the film is no mere phantom projected on a screen, but a thing that insists on its own ontological heft.



Peer Review	Externally peer-reviewed.
Conflict of Interest	The author has no conflict of interest to declare.
Grant Support	The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

Hakem Değerlendirmesi	Dış bağımsız.
Çıkar Çatışması	Yazar çıkar çatışması bildirmemiştir.
Finansal Destek	Yazar bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir.



Author Details Mustafa Türkan (Ph.D. Candidate)

Yazar Bilgileri

¹ Bahçeşehir University, Cinema and Media Research, Istanbul, Türkiye

 0000-0003-2990-2887  mustafa.turkan@bahcesehir.edu.tr

References | Kaynakça

- Arsenjuk, L. (2016). On the impossibility of object-oriented film theory. *Discourse*, 38(2), 197–214. <https://doi.org/10.13110/discourse.38.2.0197>
- Bazin, A. (2004). The ontology of the photographic image (H. Gray, Trans.). In H. Gray (Ed.), *What is cinema?* (Vol. 1, pp. 9–16). University of California Press (Original work published 1945).
- Blackmore, B. (1987, August 7). Genocide of Indians: Kubrick's "Shining" secret. *The Shreveport Journal*.
- Birks, C. (2021). *Limit cinema: Transgression and the nonhuman in contemporary global film*. Bloomsbury.
- Bolšakovas, E. (2024). The Possibility of Object-Oriented Film Philosophy. *Open Philosophy*, 7(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opphil-2024-0031>
- Bryant, L. R. (2010, 30 April). The mug blues. *Larval Subjects*. Retrieved from <https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2010/04/30/the-mug-blues/>
- Bryant, L. R. (2010, 3 May). Cinema and object-oriented ontology. *Larval Subjects*. Retrieved from <https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2010/05/03/cinema-and-object-oriented-ontology/>
- Bryant, L. R. (2010, December 24). Vicarious causation. *Larval Subjects*. Retrieved February 15, 2025, from <https://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2010/12/24/vicarious-causation-2/>
- Bryant, L. R. (2011). *The democracy of objects*. Open Humanities Press.
- Bryant, L. R. (2014). *Onto-cartography: An ontology of machines and media*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Bryant, L. R. (2023). Object-oriented ontology and science fiction cinema. In J. P. Telotte (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of new science fiction cinemas* (pp. 249–264). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197557723.013.16>
- Coëgnarts, M. (2019). *Film as embodied art: Bodily meaning in the cinema of Stanley Kubrick*. Academic Studies Press.
- Cohen, J. J. (2012). Undead (a zombie oriented ontology). *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 23(3), 397–412.
- Darabont, F. (Director). (2007). *The mist* [Film]. Dimension Films, Darkwoods Productions.
- Elsaesser, T., & Hagener, M. (2015). *Film theory: An introduction through the senses* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Epstein, J. (2012). Seeing and hearing thinking (F. Le Gac, Trans.). In S. Keller & J. N. Paul (Eds.), *Jean Epstein: Critical essays and new translations* (pp. 359–364). Amsterdam University Press (Original work published 1955).
- Gallese, V., & Guerra, M. (2020). *The empathic screen: Cinema and neuroscience* (F. Anderson, Trans.). Oxford University Press (Original work published 2015).
- Goi, L. (2023, February 16). Albert Serra on Pacifiction. *Reverse Shot*. https://reverseshot.org/interviews/entry/2990/serra_int
- Harman, G. (2002). *Tool-being: Heidegger and the metaphysics of objects*. Open Court.
- Harman, G. (2007). On vicarious causation. In R. Mackay (Ed.), *Collapse: Philosophical research and development* (Vol. 2, pp. 171–205). Urbanomic.
- Harman, G. (2017). *Object-oriented ontology: A new theory of everything*. Pelican.
- Harman, G. (2020). *Art and objects*. Polity.
- Hill, R. (2021). The Shining (1980). In A. Castle (Ed.), *The Stanley Kubrick archives* (P. Snowdon, Trans., pp. 504–556). Taschen (Original work published 2005).
- Hyland, A., & Wilson, K. (2018). *The maze: A labyrinthine compendium*. Laurence King.
- Kracauer, S. (1960). *Theory of film: The redemption of physical reality*. Oxford University Press.
- Kubrick, S. (Director). (1980). *The shining* [Film]. Warner Bros.
- Laine, T. (2011). *Feeling cinema: Emotional dynamics in film studies*. Continuum.
- Luckhurst, R. (2013). *The shining*. Bloomsbury.



- Malin, J. B. (2020). Intimate objects: Post-network television and the object-oriented aesthetics of *Breaking Bad*. *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, 38(4), 331–353. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10509208.2020.1769413>
- Mather, P. (2013). *Stanley Kubrick at Look magazine: Authorship and genre in photojournalism and film*. Intellect.
- Marks, L. U. (2000). *The skin of the film: Intercultural cinema, embodiment, and the senses*. Duke University Press.
- Marzec, A. (2020). Kino zorientowane ku przedmiotom [Object-oriented cinema]. *Kwartalnik Filmowy*, (110), 80–99. <https://doi.org/10.36744/kf.340>
- McQuiston, K. (2013). *We'll meet again: Musical design in the films of Stanley Kubrick*. Oxford University Press.
- Meillassoux, Q. (2008). *After finitude: An essay on the necessity of contingency* (R. Brassier, Trans.). Continuum.
- Morton, T. (2013). *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and ecology after the end of the world*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Naremore, J. (2007). *On Kubrick*. British Film Institute.
- Nelson, T. A. (1982). *Kubrick: Inside a film artist's maze*. Indiana University Press.
- Olivier, M. (2020). *Household horror: Cinematic fear and the secret life of everyday objects*. Indiana University Press.
- Panofsky, E. (1947). Style and medium in the motion pictures. *Critique: A Review of Contemporary Art*, (3), 5–28.
- Phillips, R. F. (Executive Producer). (2002). *Rose red* [Television miniseries]. Greengrass Productions; American Broadcasting Company.
- Poposki, Z. (2024). Knowing Holbein's objects: An object-oriented-ontology analysis of *The Ambassadors*. *Open Philosophy*, 7(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opphil-2024-0032>
- Ryan, B., & Price, A. (2022). Object-oriented photography: A speculative essay on the photography of essence. *Philosophy of Photography*, 12(1–2), 129–147. https://doi.org/10.1386/pop_00051_1
- Schneck, D. (1980, June 13). Kubrick's "Shining" – Was it worth the wait? *The Morning Call*.
- Sobchack, V. (2004). *Carnal thoughts: Embodiment and moving image culture*. University of California Press.
- Spielberg, S. (Director). (2002). *Minority report* [Film]. 20th Century Fox, DreamWorks Pictures, Amblin Entertainment.
- Sunderland, P. (2013). The autonomous camera in Stanley Kubrick's 'The Shining'. *Sydney Studies in English*, (39), 58–85.
- Švankmajer, J. (Director). (1968). *Byt [The flat]* [Short film]. Krátký film Praha.
- Taxier, E. (2020). Two ambiguities in object-oriented aesthetic interpretation. *Open Philosophy*, 3(1), 599–610. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opphil-2020-0139>
- Trigg, D. (2015). Archaeologies of hauntings: Phenomenology and psychoanalysis in *The Shining*. In D. Olson (Ed.), *Studies in the horror film: Stanley Kubrick's The Shining* (pp. 273–292). Centipede Press.
- Vertov, D. (1984). *Kino-eye: The writings of Dziga Vertov* (K. O'Brien, Trans.; A. Michelson, Ed.). University of California Press.
- Young, N. (2020). On correlationism and the philosophy of (human) access: Meillassoux and Harman. *Open Philosophy*, 3(1), 42–52. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opphil-2020-0003>
- Zettl, H. (2011). *Sight, sound, motion: Applied media aesthetics*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

