Animating Film Theory
Redrobe, Karen

Published by Duke University Press

Redrobe, Karen.
Animating Film Theory.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/70649

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=2669090
All my publications on animation of the last twenty-three years are dedicated to animating film theory—not only addressing what animation adds to the theorizing of film but doing that adding, while trying to re-dress the marginalization of animation by film studies, film history, and film theory. For animation has been their blind spot. My animating (of) film theory as film animation theory applies especially to the theorization of live action film through animation and responds to late 1960s French Marxist film theory and the Anglo-American film theory derived from it.\(^1\) Given that there is no way I can offer here a comprehensive rehearsal of my interventions over those twenty-three years, I ask the reader to consult my publications, especially my introductions to the anthologies I edited—The Illusion of Life: Essays on Animation (1991), the world’s first book of scholarly essays theorizing animation, and The Illusion of Life 2: More Essays on Animation (2007)—which directly address film studies and film theory, as well as animation studies and animation theory.\(^2\) In this chapter I offer my key results to date, my “first principles” of animation.

To ask the question, “By not writing about animated films, have theorists simply been prioritizing the live action film while still producing theory that is applicable to animation?,” misses the key first point of my 1991 introduction in The Illusion of Life, which I reiterated in my essay in that anthology.\(^3\) It is a claim I still find to be radical, and it was made ten years before Lev Manovich’s similar assertion.\(^4\) Let us call it our first “first principle” of animation: not only is animation a form of film but all film, film “as such,” is a form of animation.

Given all film by definition includes live action, live action is a form of animation. Consequently, film theorists have never not been writing
about animated films and film (as) animation, knowingly or unknowingly. I say animated films to designate that genre or mode of films traditionally defined as “animation” and treated as the least significant form of film or even not a form of film at all, rather a form of graphic art, by film studies, film history, and film theory.5

It is not only recently, with the advent of digital film, that animation has become the paradigm for all forms of cinema, and its study consequently become the study of cinema’s basic ontology overall. For me—our second principle—this has never not been the case (with the caveat, as I shall explain, that I do not subscribe to a simple ontology of cinema, much less of animation). And that primacy includes necessitating the reversal of the historical and theoretical prioritization, by those speaking for film, of film over animation. Such a reversal results in the privileging of the heretofore degraded animated film for film animation, for all film, for film “as such,” for which, as a result, the animated film becomes the paradigm.

Put simply, historically as well as theoretically, film is the “stepchild” of animation, not the other way around. This is a second radical claim that I posed in The Illusion of Life, in terms that included the film animator Emile Reynaud, creator of the praxinoscope and, most crucially here, the Théâtre Optique of 1892–1900. Reynaud is the most singular figure in film forgotten by both film studies and animation studies—and whose name, work, and achievements I sought to resurrect, reanimate.6 Indeed, Reynaud’s key term, animated, used in all his publicity, passed on to the term animated photographs, a term by which cinema was in its earliest years known, at least in France, England, and England’s colonies.

These two principles have a radical consequence. First: to theorize film without theorizing animation is to not theorize film. And a second, even more radical, one: to theorize film, including live action, without theorizing it through animation is to not theorize film. That theorizing of and through animation has been my project of the last twenty-three years.7 At the same time, insofar as live action is the special case, the conditional, reduced form of animation, what has been written about live action is by definition applicable to animation, in obviously a conditional, reduced way. By definition what has been written about animation is applicable to live action, since animation subsumes live action, is the unconditional, unreduced form of live action. Therefore, animation theory is by definition theory of live action, of what live action has come to denominate: cinema and film. And animation theory, like the
film it animates, is more. For animation film and film animation operate within, at, and beyond the limits of live action. Not only is animation never not operating within live action, the expanded field of live action is animation.

Here it is imperative to note the decades-long existence of scholars, scholarship, and publications in animation history and theory, including the ongoing, increasingly burgeoning, and increasingly animated existence of the Society for Animation Studies, founded in 1987. That scholarship in animation must be acknowledged by film historians and theorists, for it is crucial to understand that we are not at a zero-degree state in animation scholarship. Far from it.8 Nor are we at a zero-degree state in terms of film theorists theorizing animation. Here I reference not only my work but that of fourteen other authors in my two anthologies who have come out of film studies and film theory, accounting for twenty of the twenty-seven essays in the two volumes.9

In sum, film studies needs to engage with animation studies, as animation studies needs to engage with film studies.10 Animation scholars have much to learn from film studies scholars, especially from the theorizing of film and from the history of that theorizing. Put simply, for me film studies is by definition the conditional, reduced form of animation studies, and animation studies the unconditional, unreduced form of film studies. These constituencies are commingled, inextricably so, despite the lack of general acknowledgment of that on the part of either. So, yes, theorists prioritizing the live action film are still producing theory that is applicable to animation; but the specifics need to be teased out, examined, and assessed.

The questions are: first, how has animation been marked and inscribed in live action theory? And second, is this marking and inscription adequate to animation? For me, live-action theory must by definition be so marked, including with terms derived from and associated with animation, not just with the lexical forms of animate itself but with cognate terms such as authoring and engendering, and cognate expressions too, such as something has a life of its own, is coming to life, brought to life. Such terms appear often in discussions of film but are used without any awareness of, much less inquiry into, what they point to and open up as something substantive in its own right: animation. So, in response to the question, “Exactly where is film theory lacking in its consideration of animation?,” I would say: in the general absence in that theory of a direct address of animation! Theorization of live action qua live action can only get one so far in terms of theorizing animation, not
just in the theory’s consideration of live action but in the operations within that theory of animation.

For what is the point of a fixed, static—inanimate—theory of animation? Or at best a conditionally, reductively animated theory of it? What is called for is a theorization of live action, and of theories past and present of live action, through animation, even as animation calls for an animated and animating theory of itself, an animating/reanimating film animation theory, as it were, indeed an animatic theory of it, whose purport I shall elucidate.

To answer these questions, we must posit what animation is, including offering its two major definitions: the endowing with life and the endowing with motion. Any theorizing of animation cannot limit itself to that endowing with life and motion but must consider the full cycles of each, that is to say, their metamorphoses, their diminutions, and their terminations—death and nonmotion—as well as their inextricable commingling throughout their cycles.

Of course, animation immediately imbricates Latin anima (air, breath, soul, spirit, mind), Latin animus (mind, soul), and animism, even as animism is never not inextricably commingled with its opposite, mechanism. The inextricable, deconstructive commingling of animism and mechanism (and therefore of the institutions and discourses each privileges and is privileged by—the arts and humanities and the sciences and technology, respectively) in film animation makes the cinematographic apparatus the animatographic apparatus, indeed the animatic apparatus, what I dubbed animatic automaton, “ur,” “defining” technology of animation for me.

Animating not only the illusion of life but the life of (that) illusion, the vital machine that is the animatic automaton has as consequence: any theorizing of film animation only in terms of motion (and mechanism) while excluding life (and animism) is reductive, doing an injustice to animation, as is any theorizing that theorizes film animation only in terms of life (and animism) while excluding motion (and mechanism), as is any theorizing that theorizes the cinematographic apparatus without theorizing the animatographic apparatus, as is any theorizing that theorizes the animatographic apparatus without theorizing the animatic apparatus, the animatic automaton.

Given that Latin anima is a translation of Greek psyche (air, breath, soul, spirit, mind) and its ontological and ontotheological inheritance both by Western metaphysics and Christianity—and, crucially, by ontological and onto-
theological film theory, most notably André Bazin’s—to Homer’s psuché, his simulacral spectre wandering as a flitting shade in Hades. I shall return to this.

Insofar as animation privileges the primitive, the savage, the primal, the nutty, the loony, the child, the nonhuman (including all other organic forms, as well as the inorganic), and the object over what for us cinema has privileged—the civilized, the sane, the adult, the human, and the subject—the cartoon is the privileged example of what operates within animated film. The cartoon is therefore the privileged example of animated film, and the privileged example of film animation and of what operates therein—the animatic. While late 1960s French film theory (including as taken up in Anglo-American film theory, itself strongly influenced by and influencing cultural studies) privileged the subject, production, and identity, including self-identity, it neglected what is superior to them, superior to the subject and its desires: the object and its games, the world and its play. Which is to say all the things that animation for us privileges. Their vital, unmasterable life of illusion is privileged for us by animation, animation as the animatic, a life never not operating within live action and its zone of reality. Consequently, one must theorize not only the illusion of life but also the life of that illusion (illusion is from the Latin ludere, meaning “ludic” and “play”). For animation is not delimited to film. It is idea, concept, process, performance, medium, and milieu. As I wrote in 1991:

To seek to account for animation film, the theorist would be compelled to approach the idea of animation precisely as not delimited to and by the animation film (and conventional ideas of it) but as a notion whose purchase would be transdisciplinary, transinstitutional, implicating the most profound, complex and challenging questions of our culture, questions in the areas of being and becoming, time, space, motion, change—indeed, life itself.

There is a privileged relation between film animation and philosophy, a privilege I have posited as the second key neglect of film studies, and as the key neglect of animation studies too, a neglect that a number of us have been working to remedy. Which is to say that we are not at a zero-degree state in theorizing film animation in terms of “philosophy,” in treating film animation as a mode of “philosophizing,” and, let me add, “philosophizing” as a form of animation. But with this caveat: our embrace of “poststructuralist” and “postmodernist” approaches means not simply an espousal of the ontological, of Western philosophy as a meta-
physics of presence, of fullness of living being, but rather a challenge
to them, especially for me from the perspective of Jacques Derrida and
Jean Baudrillard. Of course, for Derrida, deconstruction is not philoso-
phy; it is aphilosophy, on both sides of the horizon of philosophy at the
same time, at once the philosophy of nonphilosophy and nonphilosophy
of philosophy. In other words, deconstruction is an in-betweener—
privileged in and for the theorizing of film as form of animation, of the
animatic. This makes deconstruction isomorphic with animation, and
with my aphilosophy of animation.19

For animation—animation as the animatic—is an in-betweener,
coming between any and every thing, including all oppositions, con-
founding all either/or-isms, as well as operating within any and every
thing, as well as forming the milieu, the medium, for any and every
thing, thing including one.20 But here I need to explain the animatic, as
there is more to animation than animation! For the past twenty-three
years, I have been working between and across film studies, film history,
and film theory and animation studies, animation history, and anima-
tion theory, reanimating them, even the very idea of film, through the ani-
matic. And this means working to turn animation theory and film theory
into film animation theory, to turn animation studies and film studies
into film animation studies, to turn animation and film into film anima-
tion, and thereby to turn the cinematographic apparatus into the ani-
matographic apparatus, even the animatic apparatus. And this includes
working to mark their never not being so reanimated, as well as to mark
the blind spot of the animatic as never not operative therein.

I theorize the animatic as the very singularity of animation, anterior
and superior to animation, not only the very logics, processes, perfor-
mance, and performativity of animation but the very “essence” of ani-
mation—the animation and animating of animation. The animatic sub-
sumes animation, is its very condition of possibility and at the same
time impossibility—at once the inanimation never not in and of anima-
tion and the animation never not in and of inanimation. Making anima-
tion never totally animate and inanimation never totally inanimate, the
animatic is that nonessence that at once enables and disenables anima-
tion as essence—including Sergei Eisenstein’s plasmaticness, his animis-
tic essence of film (as) animation21—as it does all essentialist theories of
film and/as animation. This is why I put the word essence in quotation
marks, under erasure. Put simply, the animatic indetermines and sus-
pends all things, including animation. Including “itself.”

The animatic is to animation what psuché is to psyche/ anima (and to
all derived from *psyche / anima*), what specter is to soul, what for Derrida *différance* is to presence, what dissemination is to essence, what the hauntological is to the ontological. Not simply different but radically, irrecursively Other—the animatic is “ur” in-betweener (with “ur,” henceforth marking nonessence)—animation itself gifting us this term in-betweener! So while Norman McLaren declared that “difference . . . is the . . . soul of animation,” for me, Derridean *différance* is the specter of animation, is animation as the animatic.22

Insofar as there is no essence to the animatic, animation is not intrinsically anything. Meaning there is no essence to film animation, including cinema. Insofar as there is no proper, propriety nor property to it, animation is always already, never not, expropriated, as is any fixed, final definition of it. As expropriated, animation cannot be appropriated by or to anything.

The animatic: what conjures animation (cinema, live action, included) and what animation seeks to conjure away but cannot, what uncannily haunts animation as its ghost, its specter, its death, cryptically incorporating, deconstructing, disseminating, and seducing it. Put simply, what is at stake in animation, including film animation, is life and death, as well as their inextricable commingling. And animation’s own life and death.

As I have written: “Animation—the simultaneous bringing of death to life and life to death—not only a mode of film (and film a mode of it) but the very medium within which all, including film, ‘comes to be.’ The animatic apparatus—apparatus which suspends distinctive oppositions, including that of the animate versus the inanimate—apparatus of the ‘uncanny.’”23 This uncanny simultaneous bringing of death and the dead to life and life and the living to death is what, after Derrida, I call *lifedeath*, at once the life of death and the death of life—both alive and dead, neither alive nor dead, at the same time. In consequence, one can never know life or death, motion or nonmotion, as such.

Lifedeath, cryptically incorporated in and deconstructing the life and death of film animation, necessarily implicates the spectator (including author, reader, analyst, and theorist)—drawing the spectator, returning it, toward death even as it draws forth, returns, toward life those dead imaged in the film. In other words, film animation, as animatic in-betweener, occupies that in-between space, that “meeting ground”—that haunted house, that crypt24—between life and death, between motion and nonmotion.

Insofar as film animation puts life and death at stake, films and film genres that explicitly stage and perform that stake are privileged for
and as animation. This privileges the horror genre, with its family of specters of the living dead (the vampire, the zombie, the mummy, and so on), and science fiction too (with its automata, robots, and cyborgs, and aliens)—and their remakings, their metamorphosings, of the human and the nonhuman.25

But that putting of life and death at stake is already there in Maxim Gorky’s paradigmatic (for Tom Gunning and me) July 4, 1896, review of the Lumière brothers’ program at the Nizhny Novgorod fair. Gorky’s is a traumatic experience and review that places cinema, film animation, in what he calls the “Kingdom of Shadows.” For me, this is the kingdom of specters, of psuché, of lifedeath, and the animatic. Through reference to this canonical review, I have repeatedly posited a privileged relation between animation and its apparatus and Freud’s uncanny (in both its psychological and anthropological modes) for the theorizing of film animation. Along with Gunning’s “An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Film and the (In)credulous Spectator” (1989), this review enabled me to posit as first, last, and enduring attraction, even primal, “ur” attraction, of cinema, of film animation . . . animation itself! The astoundingly attracting and attractingly astounding endowing with animation by means of a mechanical apparatus, marked by Gorky’s famous Frankensteinian words: “Suddenly a strange flicker passes through the screen and the picture stirs to life.”26 Not just motion but life!

And these two texts enabled me to characterize as “first, last and enduring attraction of animation,” including film animation . . . the animatic “itself”! And to posit the specter as “ur” figure of film animation as the animatic. And to posit as “ur” experience of film animation “the Cryptic Complex,” “ur” complex, composed, after Derrida, of the uncanny, the return of death as specter, endless mourning and melancholia and cryptic incorporation.27 It is a complex of the shocking return of the dead as specters and of their attraction28 to and for the spectators, and of the aftershocks felt by the spectators. Put simply, the “ur” experience, “ur” attraction, of cinema is that of animation as the animatic, as the Cryptic Complex, as the shocking, traumatic, uncanny reanimation of the dead as living dead. And at the same time, the shocking, traumatic, uncanny reanimation of the living, including the spectator, as living dead, turning spectatorship (including analysis and theorizing) into spectership, into haunting and being haunted, encrypting and being encrypted—the cryptic incorporation of the living dead specters in the spectator, and vice versa—accompanied by mourning and melancholia in perpetuity, no matter what other affects might be generated to cover them
The animatic lifedeath of the Cryptic Complex is for me the “foundation,” the foundation without foundation, of cinema and movies—of film animation. As the animatic is of all animation, its singular attraction, the “life” of its illusion.

The Cryptic Complex of animation as the animatic enabled me to recast Gunning and André Gaudreault’s “cinema of attractions” as “animation of attractions,” Gunning’s “cinema of narrative integration” as “animation of narrative ‘integration,’” and Gunning’s return of the cinema of attractions in the “Spielberg-Lucas-Coppola cinema of effects” in the 1970s and 1980s as the reanimation of the animation of attractions, as the hyperanimation of hyperattractions. Marking the increasingly pervasive impact of digital film animation as well as anime, such hyperanimation is of the order not of the hauntological nor of the ontological but of what I call the oncological.

Insofar as animation is never not informing film in all its registers, animation recasts not just the classic realist text but also the cinematic text “as such” as what I call the animated text, indeed the animatic text, text animated by the Cryptic Complex, by lifedeath. Thus, it becomes necessary to conceive of cinema, of film, as spectrography (the writing of the specter—ghost writing), as cryptography (the writing of the crypt), as thanatography (the writing of death).

But crucially, after Baudrillard, the return of death and the dead, and as specters, means yet more, for it is the return of the “ur” radical, irreconcilable, irreducible, excluded Other—the model of all radical, excluded Others. While animation privileges the simple other of what live action privileges, the animatic privileges the Other, the radical Other, the Other irreducible to simple other, simple other to the same, of both animation and film. This is the animatic—radical Other of animation, animation as radical Other—as what I call “death the animator.”

But as many of my articles after Baudrillard propose, it is not enough to theorize animation and the animatic. One must also, where applicable, theorize hyperanimation—the pure and empty form of animation, where the animate becomes more and less inanimate than inanimate and at the same time the inanimate becomes more and less animate than animate—and the hyperanimatic—the pure and empty form of the animatic. Hyperanimation and the hyperanimatic are for me of the order of the oncological, of Baudrillard’s disillusioned, disenchanted, hyperreal third and fourth orders, orders of virtual, viral, metastatic, pure and empty forms. One must theorize hyperanimation and the hyperanimatic most especially in terms of post–Second World War film and
of course computer animated film, including live action, where film becomes hyperfilm, live action becomes hyperlive hyperaction, or, better, hyperlivedead hyperaction nonaction—the pure and empty forms of film, life, the living, death, the dead, lifedeath, the living dead, action, and nonaction.

Arguably, since the Second World War, we live increasingly in the era of the hyper, of hyperreality, where hypertelia rules. Here all things push and are pushed to their limits, where they at once fulfill and annihilate themselves, including all the components of the Cryptic Complex, therefore the Complex too, which morphs into the hyperCryptic hyperComplex. It is no longer the era of lifedeath but of hyperlifedeath, and hypermotion, of hypermotion nonmotion, where the human passes into the posthuman, the hyperhuman, figured for Baudrillard by the clone, the clone figured by me as the zombie, the cyborg, and the replicant in *Blade Runner*. Here death takes on the form of hyperdeath, the absence of death, absence of the radical Other, and therefore of all others. Here hyperlifedeath reigns, where life and the living are more dead than dead, and death and the dead are more alive than alive. In other words, not only life but death has died, each replaced by cold, clonal hyperimmortality, fulfilling the human’s wish for escape from death—escape from the uncanny valley, valley for me of the shadow of death—the death of death, by definition, an escape from the human itself.

Hyperanimation and the hyperanimatic increasingly present themselves as the most compelling and singular processes of not only contemporary “film” but the contemporary “world” and “subject.” The implication is clear: we need animation film theory, film animation theory, animation theory “as such,” and especially hyperanimation hyperfilm theory and hyperfilm hyperanimation theory, to attempt to understand film, the world and the subject, especially in their hyperforms. And we need television, video, and especially computer animation theory, because these media, these technologies—like film, by definition animators/reanimators, including of the world and the subject—increasingly pervade and reanimate the mediascape, or rather immediascape, of the world and the subject, an immediascape, world, and subject that are increasingly hyperanimated, hyperanimatic. For today not only do we swim in a sea of hyperanimated hypermedia, hypertotechnologies, but that sea swims inside hyperanimated, immediated, hypermediated, hypertecnologized, hyperremediated, hyperirradiated us.

To conclude, but alas with a few caveats: whether Baudrillard’s first order of the Radical Illusion of Seduction (for me, the animatic) has been
annihilated in the passage into the Perfect Crime of Virtuality of his third/fourth orders of hyperreality, virtual reality (for me, the hyperanimatic), or the hyperanimatic is but the avatar of the animatic is for me, as it was for him, undecidable, irresolvable.34

This is a reminder of the hypothetical nature of the “principles” I have proposed—speculations, indeed specters, spectering, cryptically incorporating, this specter-speculator-spectator-analyst-theorist, and I they. Specters never laid to rest, never resolved, never reconciled. In fact, a specter, an evil demon, after Baudrillard, keeps pressing me to propose: thanks to the animatic, the only first principle of animation is there is no first principle of animation.

And there are never not more specters, crypts, analyses to come.

Notes

A nod of acknowledgment to John Grierson’s famous “First Principles of Documentary.” But unlike the essentialist Grierson, I put First Principles in quotation marks to show their deconstructive nature, undoing themselves in their very inscribing.

1. My animating (of) film theory also, in my own small way, responds to cognitive film theory. See Cholodenko, “Animation (Theory) as the Poematic: A Reply to the Cognitivists.”

2. In addition to the introductions to my two animation anthologies, see the following for my discussion of film studies and film theory, as well as animation studies and animation theory: “Animation (Theory) as the Poematic”; “Animation—Film and Media Studies’ ‘Blind Spot’”; “The Animation of Cinema”; “Who Framed Roger Rabbit, or the Framing of Animation”; and “Why Animation, Alan?”

3. See Cholodenko, “Who Framed Roger Rabbit, or the Framing of Animation.”

4. See Cholodenko, “Introduction,” The Illusion of Life 2; and Cholodenko, “The Animation of Cinema.” In both texts I acknowledge those who I discovered have theorized film as a form of animation before both Manovich and I did: Alexandre Alexeieff, Ralph Stephenson, Taihei Imamura, and Sergei Eisenstein.

5. I abandon here what I have done in a number of publications over the years, that is, to capitalize film studies to mark it, unlike animation studies, as an established discipline, only then to deconstruct film studies consistent with my claim that all film is a form of animation. Put simply, film studies must be obedient to (the very “principle” of) animation itself, never fixed, static, immobile, such as a capital letter might be thought to denote.


7. That theorizing includes the necessary (re)theorizing through animation of all modes, forms, registers, and aspects of film and its apparatus. As examples of my retheorizing of authorship, auteur theory, and genre theory, see “Intro-
duction,” *The Illusion of Life*; “(The) Death (of) the Animator, or: The Felicity of Felix,” part II; and “The ‘ABCs’ of B.”


9. I also reference the work of Vivian Sobchack and that of authors in this volume. Many more are to come, led there by digital film animation.


11. See Cholodenko, “Introduction,” *The Illusion of Life*, 15. A student, Dominic Williams, once nicely noted for me that the term *live action* contains both pertinences of animation—life and motion.

12. See Cholodenko, “Introduction,” *The Illusion of Life* 2; and “Speculations on the Animatic Automaton.” Metamorphosis is a privileged figure in and for animation.


14. See Cholodenko, “(The) Death (of) the Animator, or: The Felicity of Felix,” part II.

15. See especially Cholodenko, “The Nutty Universe of Animation, the ‘Discipline’ of All ‘Disciplines,’ and That’s Not All, Folks!” Animation as the animatic privileges the “life” of inorganic objects.


17. For my “principles” drawing the longest reach possible for animation, see Cholodenko, “Introduction,” *The Illusion of Life* 2, 67–68. See also “The Nutty Universe of Animation, the ‘Discipline’ of All ‘Disciplines,’ and That’s Not All, Folks!,” where I posit a privileged relation between animation as the animatic and quantum physics and quantum cosmology; and “(The) Death (of) the Animator, or: The Felicity of Felix,” part III, where I relate animation to biogenetics.


19. For me, the work of Derrida offers the richest ways to theorize film animation, offering not only a theory of film animation as the animatic but an animated, indeed animatic, theory of it. See below.

20. Norman McLaren apprehended the key nature of the in-between for animation when he made the foundation of animation the “invisible interstice” that lies between frames. Cited in Sifianos, “The Definition of Animation,” 62.


24. See Cholodenko, “The Crypt, the Haunted House, of Cinema”; and “(The) Death (of) the Animator, or: The Felicity of Felix,” part III.
27. On cryptic incorporation, see Cholodenko, “The Crypt, the Haunted House, of Cinema.” Cryptic incorporation (i.e., incomplete, failed mourning) makes the self forever for Derrida a “lodging, the haunt of a host of ghosts,” as is for me the movie theater. Derrida, “Fors,” xxiii.
28. Here I must highlight attraction as a term of drawing, from the Latin trahere. But the attraction of the animation of attractions is animatic, at once attraction and repulsion / retraction. This is to mark, too, the privileged relation between the graph (from Greek graphein, meaning both writing and drawing) and animation, of what I call the graphematic (the inextricable coimplication of writing and drawing) and the animate. The graphematic and the animate are themselves inextricably coimplicated, making writing / drawing a form of animation and animation a form of writing / drawing. In “The Animation of Cinema,” “The Illusion of the Beginning,” “Still Photography?,” and “Who Framed Roger Rabbit, or the Framing of Animation,” I demonstrate why drawing and animation have priority over live action, over cinema, as photo-graphed film, making live action cinema ironically a form of the graphic too! In response to film theorists who posit photography as the foundation of cinema, including Siegfried Kracauer and Bazin, there are two key “foundations” before photography, including and subsuming it: graphics and animation, thereby deconstructing and seducing photographic “indexicality.”
32. Or rather, as the hyperzombie, George A. Romero’s zombie, to be distinguished from the classic voodoo zombie. On the hyperzombie, see Cholodenko, “The ‘ABCs’ of B”; and “(The) Death (of) the Animator, or: The Felicity of Felix,” part III. On the cyborg and replicant, see Cholodenko, “Speculations on the Animatic Automaton.”
33. In terms of animism and mechanism, film animation has passed from Baudril-lardian first order seductive, enchanting animatic automaton and second order productive, animated, automatic robot to third and fourth order hypersimulacral, disenchanting, hyperanimated, hyperautomated cyborg, hyperzombie, and replicant. See Cholodenko, “Speculations on the Animatic Automaton.”
34. See Baudrillard, The Perfect Crime, 5, 74; and Baudrillard, The Vital Illusion, 53, 55.