

WHAT WILL YOU WATCH TONIGHT?



A NETFLIX ORIGINAL DOCUMENTARY ABOUT
GAY TALESE AND AMERICA'S MOST NOTORIOUS MOTEL MANAGER

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Voyeurism is defined as a unilateral mode of viewing, which any critical viewer will counterpose to *other* ways of seeing. Marcel Duchamp's [artistic research](#) features a conceptual query on the *inner* workings of images: the viewer can critically succeed at *containing* the voyeur. The voyeur is a candidate *subjective* counterpart of the signed mass-produced object: the *readymade*.

At the other end of the “pool” features the *con-corporeal*—a neologism coined by Arnd Schneider (2021, p. 144). The viewer is left with an almost physical sensation of being present: that is [sensorial](#) in the *dual* sense of sensing *and* interfacing; e.g. by the intermedium of a sensor. For instance, as the image itself stands to witness the existence and reality of what it conveys.

For the record: let us not forget that there is no reality—in the case of humans—which is *not both* sensed *and* interfaced (conjointly). This is why we alternate between *working* (sensing tooled with an interface) and *using* (interfacing augmented by sensing). This alternation is likely core to development and estimation of *value*. And accordingly enters into *transaction*: see [leaflet 4/7](#).

The *hyperreal* can be located *between* voyeurism *and* the con-corporeal: midways between the shallow end (*voyeurism*) and deep end (the *con-corporeal*) of a “pool”. The distinctive feature of the hyperreal is the *emulation, substitution* and *erasure* of the real. The ‘idolatrous’ code—as it were—that voyeurism and the con-corporeal often share: that is, the source-code of *representation*.

The Netflix movie [Voyeur](#)—with the subtitle *What will you watch tonight?*—is a case in point: featuring a motel-voyeur, the journalist reporting on it and us watching. In this movie-narrative the three vantage points are included. What is the difference between the voyeur and the reporter, looking for a story, and the viewers who are asking exactly this question: “what will I watch tonight?”

Hence the movie narrative develops in a triangle between the *voyeur*, the *reporter* and the *movie-viewer*: and it alternates between these three vantage points— a) the voyeur, b) the con-corporeal [being almost physically present to the three vantage point; the motel-owner, the reporter and our seat], c) the hyperreal [the movie is conveying a sense of the real *within* this triangle].

What we have here is a mass-produced industrial item: we can watch anything else. And it is in this sense that it is *representation*—a *readymade*. Or, we can watch *this*: and it features a wealth of signatures... in the first rank, of course, the movie directors (Myles Kane and Josh Koury). It is generic and unique at the same time. The vantage points are similar to academic reading.

For instance, reading Arnd Schneider's *Expanded visions: A new anthropology of the moving image* (2021), we will alternate between the unidirectional mode of viewing, the con-corporeal and the hyperreal. It would seem to be almost unavoidable, if it were not for the itinerary of the moving image, that features the book's chief errand: breaking out, moving alongside, adjacently.

An aggregate building a *readiness potential* for criticality: which, across a *critical threshold* will hatch a *new repertoire* of seeing—a *phase-shift* in the current mode of viewing, which is empirical in the sense that we can neither know exactly *when* it occurs, nor *what* it will be triggered by. However, when it occurs we will *record* (and *replay* it): this, I propose to call a *reference*.