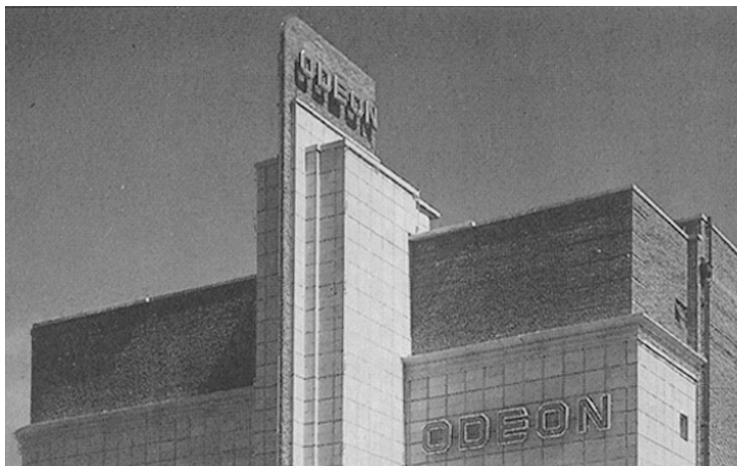


# FIDDLING WITH THE FACULTY

EDWARD CLIVE & FIONA JAMES

We are married. We've been working through and off each other for years. With this in mind this entry might be seen as a singular step in an on going project. A project that's become so conflated that extracting a source or singular trigger would be pointless at best. From the bed of this confusion emerges a 'thing': a strand or suggestion that shifts but stays steady, a bone of contention or mutual question that our practices and process feed and eat from. How and what does that out-dated thing do and how might its score take on substance? In short, its a long-term, insiders attempt to think marriage beyond the practicalities of pairing, the convenience of sex from close quarters and the bla bla bla of 'monogamous love'. It is not a collaboration. Rather than needing to 'get on' it wants to get onwards and does so by discounting all but the best of paranoia's production; pushing and pulling it through physical frames to flog and train its best traits. Importantly, it's wary and revelling in its own restraints, tinkering, teasing and talking them through in practices aesthetic and social. Lets get one thing straight, neither of us believe marriage is 'the answer' or a structure particularly worth saving from the criticism against its normalising protocols. Instead, both of us are interested in what happens when commitment, in all its radicality, allows for types of co-independence that can reframe and open-up practical approaches towards inhabiting parasitic positions. What happens when a social signifiers set in motion? What more can you feast from then and who does it put on the menu? Framed otherwise its a live and lived endorsement of all things leach like; their matter-of-fact attitude towards aching dependency, shared pulse, and moderated blood lust,

neck if you suck mine (scratch or suck, whatever's your itch; back or neck, who cares when there's double the limbs to go round). Like co-evolution its development is decisively slow, dutifully strange and sometimes deceptively stupid. Hiding in the light of the performative this 'thing' takes its own privileges (along with the tax breaks and in-laws phone calls), making the most of connectedness by taking the 'do' through its doing. Its restricted work but someone(s) needs to do it. Anyway back to the plot or the step in this book. What we have here are scraps of suggestion that may or may not survive alone (first rule of the parasite; biding time has its benefits). The impetus for texts 1-3 was an invite, from one asking the other, to respond to an installation that took a small town cinema as it's organising principle (a very English small town, insular and oh so misleadingly normative). Performed on the opening night, with Jane Frances Dunlop, these texts seemed to need some links to that context calling for some sort of frame that would flesh out their concepts. The labour bounced back (obliged by parasitic interest and not duty, of course). So the references here are an attempt by one to re-contextualise the other, while situating the texts beyond the environment of the show and towards this space. Supporting while subverting their authors intent, they seek to snatch back or absorb the material, to fatten it up and get it ready for yet more regurgitation. A fluid but sticky passing. A translation perhaps, that's bitten off more than it can chew, leaving mush in the mouth for later.



Archival photograph taken 1937

The distinctive tower and fin of the Odeon Cinema Yeovil,  
designed 1937 by Harry Weedon.  
One of 258 cinemas the chain built across England between the late 20's and  
early 40's.

## 1. THE THROBB

*[To be read in the dark]*

The seats were damp with teenage lust<sup>1</sup>.

The sort that gains its traction in the board imaginings of a small town with its obvious limitations and physical frustrations, a kind of localized condition that occurs in similar a contexts and might seem familiar to those who've been within its logic, a particular bodily yearning that's enhance not depleted by living with the expected and being taunted by its structure.

Curious not conscious and restless rather than raw, it serves a multitude of functions, the most instants entertainment, but looking back I suppose it was all an education<sup>2</sup>.

Anyway the seats were damp with teenage lust, and something clung in the air that was of the inside of bodies and not solid so it would sneak in to inhabit neglected senses.

In the cinema's space where sight and sound are pampered, these in-takes would collate to complete for their priority, vying for perception not off the surface situation, but once on the inner inside and already well at work.

Less obviously occupied and all air they'd take their graces, reinforcing each other at the cost of their competitors, who'd then flicker beyond the control of the editors precision, disrupting the narrative at depth, bellow the decency of distraction.

Two teams of feeling,

One set processing the space and the other its primary function<sup>3</sup>.

One set parasitic of an emerging situation, one set catalytic to this side attraction

Splitting attention like legs or the intricacies of an argument

Anyway something of the inside of bodies clung around.

The clinging as a taste it would be sweet yet slightly stale, like that of sweat produced while cold and just through agitation, it would be made of mixed up musk's and have a familiar sort of feeling that would trigger off a knowing before needing an understanding, meaning it could operate without facts about its origin.

As a scent, its wasn't delicate but an resistant confusion.



carrying slight sniff's such as the slip that forms in girls knickers,  
or the breath of mouths absently left long open,  
lingering gormless, while they host anticipation.  
Among it the bite of climax would be notable in its absence,  
leaving it decisively inconclusive and more contagious for it.

Cut short, this 'it' did work and it did it well  
It would touch in the back of the throat, smell from the lungs, and  
taste on your skin,  
an industrious contaminant, that pushed the privates dark to  
public<sup>4</sup>.  
Its surplus would support lack and oblige it by osmosis,  
encouraging a talking back more complex than action.  
Sitting age 14 in its edge,  
inquisitive, all focus would be quivering,  
rehearsing its resilience, and right to keep up wandering  
Concentration shifting boarder substance like the politics on the  
screen,  
I would wait there as though watching but throbbing from my  
waist.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bennell: *I've been afraid a lot of times in my life but I didn't know the real meaning of fear until I kissed Becky. One moments sleep and the girl I loved was an inhuman enemy bent on my destruction. That moments sleep was death. Their bodies were now host harbouring, a cosmic form which, to survive, must take over every human man. So I ran, I ran... My only hope was to get away from Santa Mira to get to the highway; to warm the others of what was happening.*  
- *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) 1:15:58

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Kauffman: *You and I are scientific men. You can understand the wonder of what's happened. Just think. Less than a month ago Santa Mira was like any other town; people with nothing but problems. Then out of the sky came a solution. Seeds drifting through space for years took root in a farmers' field. From the seeds came pods which had the power to reproduce themselves in the exact likeness of any form of life.*  
Dr. Bennell: *So that's how it began, out of the sky.*  
Dr. Kauffman: *Your new bodies are growing in there, they are taking you over cell for cell, atom for atom. There's no pain. suddenly, while you are asleep they absorb your minds, your memories and your reborn into an untroubled world.*  
Dr. Bennell: *Where everyone's the same?*

<sup>3</sup> There's a head, centre shot. Though the mouths placement suggests it was human, the fangs framing the over sized entry give it the appearance of something beast-like. Veins strain, searching out from the face. Seemingly random in their placement, they don't follow the logic of hair growth or coverage. In the film still, each strand is caught mid wriggle bending curling, and following their own autonomous path away from the body they sprout from. The would-be eyes are barely visible and no longer at the surface, presumably covered by translucent tissue. They direct upwards, its possible to assume but not determine why. In the background, figures in American football uniforms, flank either side, heads tilted back assuming the same stance while presumably forgoing the same process. This injects the image with instant 'Americana' while their helmets short cut the need (and cost) of individual makeup or CGI, capitalising on a privilege of film where visual integrity can be traded for a wider sensory insinuation. The background suggestion serves the foreground concept. The devil is in the un-detailed generic mass of the common. Its dark and raining hard. I doubt they feel or care.

- *The Faculty* (1994) 01:15:41

<sup>4</sup> 'What the hell are those things?' They don't respond. Its a pod, a palm sized object, organic and waiting that they lift out of the crate in their hand. It starts to open, changing shape and unfurling as it's raised to the height of a face. Typically late, the human bolts but in doing so exposes his back. A bad move. A tentacle rapidly ejects right into his spine and fuses itself within a fraction of a second. Instantly pacified and calm the human shifts. All resistance gone it acknowledges its accomplice, more tentacles extend, reaching like fingers till they both dock in an odd right of passage. It seems wrong to presume this is functional. In the style of true to 90's horror the none-too-subtle sound effects of squeaks and audio wiggles propose pleasure yet it also seems wrong to presume that's what contact does for other entities. This is still limited in its imagining.

- *The Puppet Masters* (1994) 00:32:19



'The Look' (2012) installation detail  
Un-smoked cigarette on mixed media plinth.

Appropriated trick taken from Aliens (1986),  
[The shot pans over a meditative Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) frozen still as she  
contemplates the horror of the first film, cigarette in hand.]

## 2. GUM

*[To be read aloud while chewing a whole pack of gum]*

I am gum

Gum, gum, gum, gum

Slowly going cold on the underside of a cinema seat,

dropping bellow gob warm, hardening very slowly.

Nervously chewed, squelched and shifted through shapes,

My dexterity is heightened the more shit that I take.

I've willingly acted as a filter for your tension,

and adapted as a substance that takes on a little boredom,

absorbing different toothy rhythms that changes when it lessens.

I've been the expresser of an attitude, and the spineless matter of  
your mumbling,

Keeping warm patiently while you fail about fumbling.

As function not food, for fresh breath in preparation,

I'm also a temporary inhabitator of actions moderation

An outlet for the bodies twitch when consumed in anticipation,

who chews who, from my view, is coming up for negotiation

I am gum plucked a little early in my current situation,

so still slightly flavoured and puckered full of colour,

glistening all spitty,

thumbed flat, slightly roughly,

discarded at the height of my potential elasticity<sup>6</sup>.

Though I should be more bitter, I'm loving my rejection.

I've been ditched by a jaw about to up our entertainment.

I've resigned to squish back and get my rock on slowly, working  
moulded memory into sub-cerebral simulation.

You see latched bellow your lap to the very seat you sit on,

I'm more receptive to your play than the story you weren't  
watching.

Though I've glanced on the screen when you're orifice would  
open, that plot was flat and clearly dry, not my chosen titillation.

I'm now sitting, silently absorbed bellow the situation,

Feeding off the lap lead frenzy I pick up on indirectly.

A dense bundle of sensing, I am pre-cognitive projection<sup>7</sup>,

Sitting there knowing the alteration of erections.

Stretched and popped, I've been both the flicked and the finger,  
and you just made me malleable by taunting me within you.  
I'm heightened matter, not yet grey or brain dumb  
Feeling really sticky from your undeveloped fun.  
My resistance feigned and temporary in the rehearsal of your  
tongue,  
Who wouldn't want the sensory snatch of cherry popping gum.

I am gum

I am bellow and beyond all the dreams of your human genitalia

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Horney lump of gum fore playing, foreplay  
sitting there getting hard like a little pinkie pervert.  
it likes it when you chew it rough, and blow it a bit bigger.  
it also likes to rot the brains of those who'll be its victim.

<sup>5</sup> Delicate strands like cotton candy slip up the sleeves of the sleeping and the transformation begins. Aching pods straining like vulvas spit out clones of their humans host, reducing their bodies to worthless grey goo and sapping their souls in the process. When I say spit its perhaps more of a gradual regurgitation. Something that's gone in (as mere information) is now coming out little bit changed from the procedure. Its slow, a little like a cat coughing up a fur ball, knowing it has to patiently trust its throats ejection as any conscious attempts to force it would welcome suffocation (a risky function that old cats learn well; these are clearly old cats, or anything they choose for that matter, adept at this operation). Adult heads crown from these despicable vaginas, forming as they go developing on contact with the world. Though supposedly vulnerable and exposed for a while there is nothing more dangerous than a sleeping man and so the home team lose their advantage by frequently napping on set.

- *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978) 01:11:43

<sup>6</sup> Shortly after footnote 2, 10 mins on in the plot: A undeveloped clone, stopped in the developmental process by the waking of its victim, lies on an autopsy table. As though the half formed face wasn't enough, they test the hand for fingerprints. Surprisingly they come up blank confirming the suspicion that the body is not dead as its never had life to begin with. Semantics.

- *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) 00:41:14

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth: 'I keep seeing these people all recognising each other. Something is passing between them all, some secret. Its a conspiracy, I know it'.

- *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978) 00:23:52



Studio 2, sofa and bed shop, Yeovil  
Photograph taken 15.05.2012

Interior shot of showroom occupying  
the former auditorium of the Odeon Cinema, Yeovil.

### 3. THE PRO'S AND CON'S OF INATTENTION

written and performed with Jane Frances Dunlop.

*[Alternating statements to be read with a partner, whilst passing a large lump of gum back and forth.]*

The boy in J12 is too shy to make a move but watches sex scenes while sitting close to girls and thinking hard. Some times he clutches his bum cheeks in quick succession just because it feels nice.

The couple by the aisle, 2 rows from the back are regulars. They have been working through their friendship group and have got to the last choice on their list, they are both imagining someone else to differing degrees of success.

E9 is not sure how everyone else grades their bases but that defiantly felt like fifth.

The girl in L7 gets felt up from both sides. She is racing them in her head to see who gets there first. She doesn't yet understand that this strategy will back fire when she applies it to full intercourse.

The group in the middle have no contact with each other but are all telepathically imagining the same orgy. J10 has taken the initiative to include their pets in this fantasy (amphibians as well).

The girl in C14 is new to this situation but the sensation feels more like a tiny poo retreating than her previous bath time experiments. She speculates that C15 has missed the target or is sexually advanced their age.

On row A14 a cheeky cold sore is swapping faces and feeling pretty please with itself.

Slap and tickle are sitting at the front experimenting, but the noise of the film outdoes out their showmanship.

At the back eager for attention the projection dances wildly but no one seems to notice.

Despite the plots best efforts to let them know about the zombies gathering out side, no one even moves. Their imminent doom serves

F25 whisper the subtitles in F26's ear but replaces the definite article with bum, and the auxiliary verbs, with shit, fuck and cock accordingly.

The other seat are jealous that T26, back right, gets most of the action but if the truth be told he's just worn out.

Bum usher walks to bum isle and picks up bum wrappers that shit fuck left behind.

The guy in row H is trying hard to concentrate on the film, but his erection is straining to peer over the chair in front.

The couple in row N miss a kiss and bang their teeth together. Hard.

The old man at the back is definitely wanking. In theory this should not be inappropriate but the theory is out of fashion.

D8 knows he shouldn't be chewing her tongue but was too just cheap for cop porn.

Row F, Two cinema die-hards, having carried out all the obvious sex acts, a fondle the furniture with finesse.

C3 near the front is sitting by herself with sticky fingers, and an empty bag of candy.

No one in row M is meant to be together, this row is secretly cursed.

Row K half way along. Having successfully got his finger in isn't sure what to do, so spells out his name C... H... R... till she moves about uncomfortably<sup>8</sup>.

B7 loves sock anyway and real boobs would remind him of his mum which he'd find quite off putting.

S16 thinks S17 is getting wet. Actually she's straining so hard not to laugh its just a little bit of wee.

Sad scared seat hates horror. Recently life for him is like being trapped inside a nightmare.



The Frustrated seat from the future was silenced for seeking attention but he was only squeaking the truth.

He has a thing for gigantism so her format is ideal, when there are legs three meters long who'd settle for the real.

The music stops the crowd gets up to arrange themselves alphabetically. Unfortunately this does nothing to correct the problems of gender.

All fart and no poo, turns out he's not as hard as he makes out.

Around these parts they call her gusher, she likes 'it' but not them.

He's asleep, it's the only reason he comes here.

mean while else where,

stranded at the drive in branded a fool,

what will they say Monday at school

Frustrated by how heteronormative its all become the girls who do boy's like their girls give up and do girls like they are boys.

Frustrated by how anthropocentric its all become three wildebeest rut loudly on the screen.

Frustrated by how carnal its all become two nuts unscrew from the chair they are attached to.

Frustrated by how logical its all become the dish ran away with the spoon.

Frustrated by how clichéd its all become they fade out on a kiss

Frustrated by how repetitive its all become they fade out on a kiss

Frustrated by how narrative its all become they kiss out on a fade

Frustrated by how desperate its become they blame it on the 'they'<sup>9</sup>

Frustrated by how taste less it become the who scene fades to grey

They make out that it is because of the dark but really they just don't know what they are doing.

<sup>8</sup> *The Body Snatchers* was written by Jack Finney in 1955 which, as the character Stokely from *The Faculty* (1998) notes, is a rip off of *The Puppet Masters* written by Robert A. Heinlein in 1951. *The Faculty* itself is also a rip-off of, well, both books and all prior films. Stokely's reflections also bare resemblance to the nature this legacy of films (and the various narratives male perpetrators) has re-consumed itself over the last 50 odd years with Leonard Nimroy playing a professor in *The Brain Eaters* (1958) and a psychiatrist in *Invasion of The Body Snatchers* (1978), alongside Donald Sutherland who also starred in *The Puppet Masters* (1994). Its difficult not to draw a peculiar parallel to the film-industrial re-birthing of male heroes and villains with the hi-jacked body snatching of the characters' fictive roles.

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth: *I hate you!*

Dr Kribner: *We don't hate you- there is no need for hate now. Or love.*

Elizabeth: *There are people that will fight you. Stop you.*

Dr Kribner: *In an hour you wont want them to. Don't be trapped by old concepts. Matthew, you are evolving in to a new life form.*

