**Kubrick’s Double: *Lolita*’*s* Hidden Heart of Jewishness**

**Abstract**

Drawing upon material gleaned from the Kubrick Archives in London, this article argues that Stanley Kubrick’s 1962 adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov’s 1955 novel, *Lolita*, allows us the possibility, albeit not the certainty, of reading Jewish into his film. While, on the surface, Kubrick’s *Lolita* seemingly distances itself from active concern with questions or representations of Jewishness, its Jewish traces are not entirely scrubbed away. The focus of this article is the character of Clare Quilty, particularly in terms of Kubrick’s choice of casting for the role, and Peter Sellers’ performance of it.

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**Introduction**

The conventional dogma on Stanley Kubrick was that while he was born a Jew he was not a Jewish director. Indeed, according to scholar Geoffrey Cocks and writer Frederic Raphael, who collaborated with Kubrick on the screenplay for *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), Kubrick deliberately erased the Jewishness of the characters of his source material;[[1]](#endnote-1) for example, in his final film, he removed any *overt* reference to the ethnicity of the protagonists of Arthur Schnitzler’s *Traumnovelle* (1926). In contrast, it will be argued here that Kubrick “directed Jewish,” that is, whether consciously or unconsciously, he inserted what Ella Shohat called “a hidden Jewish substratum” – despite the absence of any such explicit “ethnic” designation – beneath the epidermic surface of the film.[[2]](#endnote-2) As Henry Bial, *inter alia*, has argued, minority ethnic cultural texts are frequently marked by specialist knowledge unavailable to majority audiences. [[3]](#endnote-3) Such an approach relies on the director, the writer (of source material and/or the screenplay), and often the actors placing, both consciously and unconsciously, characteristics, behaviors, beliefs, and other tics, all of which require a prerequisite and prior knowledge. In this way, directors (and actors/actresses) encode clues that can be read in terms of Jewish specificity, producing what Jon Stratton has called “Jewish moments,”[[4]](#endnote-4) but which a general audience decodes as universal. This requires a strategy employing a “complex of codes that cross-check each other,”[[5]](#endnote-5) of which the Jewish identities of actors/actresses is a key, but by no means the only, part.[[6]](#endnote-6) Other important clues include historical, traditional, and cultural references, appearance, intellect, behavior, profession, names, physiognomy, foods, verbal and body language, phenotype, aural, visual or emotional/genre signs, speech patterns and accents, hairstyles, anxieties, neuroses, and conflicts. This strategy of “directing” or “acting Jewish” relies on the viewer to locate, identify, and decode those clues which can be both textual and extra-textual. Consequently, the individual viewer is given the possibility of “*reading Jewish*” but not with certainty, and with positing varying degrees of pertinence, in such a reading, to the film’s overall meaning.[[7]](#endnote-7)

This approach will be applied to Kubrick’s 1962 adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov’s 1955 novel, *Lolita*, to argue that Kubrick allowed us the possibility, albeit not the certainty, of reading Jewishness in *Lolita*. Nabokov’s novel has already been read as having an underlying twin concern with the Holocaust and antisemitic prejudice in post-war America. In a book full of subtle allusions to World War II, for example, Humbert Humbert refers to “the brown wigs of tragic old women who had just been gassed” and Humbert himself is the unintentional target of the sort of “gentleman’s agreement” antisemitic prejudices that continued in post-war America.[[8]](#endnote-8) Although these specific references disappeared in the adaptation of the novel into a film, their Jewish traces[[9]](#endnote-9) were not entirely scrubbed away.

Draft screenplays are constantly changed and *Lolita* was not unusual in this respect. During the course of pre-production, a range of script documents were generated. Nevertheless, using the model proposed by Steven Price, they can be described as “*modular*” texts, that is, certain elements remained consistent while others were interchangeable or discarded altogether.[[10]](#endnote-10) This writing process and the resulting screenplay texts formed a palimpsest in which layers of new material were laid on top of the original scenario which still, however, retained an authorial intention that was perhaps not wholly erased by industrial, commercial, and other considerations. Thus while some of the minutiae of the scene texts of the various drafts of the screenplays, such as characters, similes, or other figures of speech that cannot be or are not visualized cinematically, may have disappeared on the surface of the film text, they nonetheless remained on the sub-epidermis of the film itself as signs of an authorial and directorial intention. Moreover, *multiple and consistent* but coded clues suggest that Kubrick inserted a submerged substratum of Jewishness into the film, highlighting and amplifying elements in the novel that *he* read as Jewish, and hence allowing us to read the film as Jewish.[[11]](#endnote-11)

The focus of this article will be the character of Clare Quilty, particularly in terms of Kubrick’s choice of casting for the role, and Peter Sellers’ subsequent performance of it.[[12]](#endnote-12) Between Kubrick and Sellers, Quilty became *Lolita*’s undisputed and sinister heart of darkness. *Lolita* may have been a film based on a novel named after its titular teenage girl (the words “Lolita” bookend the text), but the film verbally opens and closes with Humbert’s cry of “Quilty, Quilty,” before ending on the caption: “Humbert Humbert died of coronary thrombosis in prison awaiting trial for the murder of Clare Quilty.” It will argue that there are various self-reflexive clues in Sellers’ improvised performance producing Jewish moments, that is, where, through a complementary directing and acting strategy, the viewer is given the *possibility* of “*reading Jewish*,” albeit not with certainty, for Quilty’s Jewishness is “textually submerged.”[[13]](#endnote-13) However, no attempt is made herein to argue that *Lolita* is in some essential way “Jewish” simply because Kubrick was or because he cast Jewish actors in the film. To aid in examining Quilty’s performance, the essay will draw upon, where appropriate, newly available material gleaned from the Kubrick Archives at the University of the Arts, London.

**Sellers’ Shtick**

In a 2007 study of Kubrick, James Naremore opined, “The casting of Claire Quilty was Kubrick’s most radical choice.”[[14]](#endnote-14) Kubrick’s choice of Sellers is particularly important for the purpose of discovering a submerged Jewish substratum undergirding *Lolita*. Sellers was Jewish by birth through his maternal line; although he did not actually practice any religion per se and did not have a bar mitzvah, he was circumcised, and as the only Jewish boy at a North London Catholic school, he was certainly aware of his Otherness in ethnic and religious terms.[[15]](#endnote-15) In an interview with *The Jewish Chronicle* in 1959, he explained how he felt Jewish emotionally, sentimentally, and gastronomically, sharing the Jewish “clannish feeling,” devotion to family and children, and sense of humor.[[16]](#endnote-16) In theory, it can be argued that an actor or actresses’ ethnicity and/or religion is irrelevant to the part s/he is playing. However, the “real-life” status of the actor/actress behind the depiction often provides the director with an additional choice to her/his casting, as well providing the viewer, in this instance, with an extra clue to reading Jewish in the conflation of cinematic role/persona with real life. It also may well provide us with some insight into how Kubrick conceived of the role of Quilty since “broader ideological factors influence casting decisions,” which, in turn, become relevant to understanding the film.[[17]](#endnote-17) In this respect, we can certainly take into account Sellers’ previous roles as Jews in *Sellers’ Market* (1950), *The Goon Show* (BBC Home Service, 1951-60), and *Finkel’s Café* (BBC, 1956).

Because Kubrick felt that “the story offers a marvellous opportunity for humor,”[[18]](#endnote-18) he wanted to cast a comic actor. Sellers had displayed a wide comedic range up to that point in *The Ladykillers* (Alexander Mackendrick, 1955), *The Naked Truth* (Charles Crichton, 1957), and *The Battle of the Sexes* (Mario Zampi, 1959), as well as on the BBC radio series *The Goon Show*. Perhaps Kubrick was particularly attracted to Sellers’s shtick;hailing from the world of stand-up comedy and radio parody sketches, Sellers shared an affinity with such Jewish stand-up comics as Mel Brooks, Sid Caesar, Mike Nichols, Lenny Bruce, and Elaine May.[[19]](#endnote-19) This stand-up sensibility was allowed to permeate the entire film as Sellers was given a freedom to improvise *in front of the camera* that Kubrick gave few other performers, either before or since: James Mason, who played Humbert, recollected that Sellers was “the only one allowed, or rather encouraged, to improvise his entire performance. The rest of us improvised only during rehearsals, then incorporated any departures from the original script that seemed particularly effective.”[[20]](#endnote-20) For Mason, Kubrick “was so besotted with the genius of Peter Sellers that he never seemed to have enough of him.”[[21]](#endnote-21) Despite his authoritarian, auteurist reputation, Kubrick permitted, even suggested that, his cast improvise, but, according to Gene D. Phillips, *only during the rehearsals*.[[22]](#endnote-22) However, as Kubrick and Sellers grew closer, it became clear that they shared many hobbies and the same mordant and morbid sense of humor. According to Kubrick’s biographer, Vincent LoBrutto, “The two men were bonded by a growing cynicism about life. Kubrick especially prompted Sellers to probe the darker side of the comedy of *Lolita*. Sellers had feared that his interpretation of Quilty went too far, but Kubrick assured him that larger-than-life was the essential reality.”[[23]](#endnote-23)

Beginning with the lines as they were sketched in the screenplay, Sellers interpreted them in any way he wished in his devising of the character – and dialogue – of Quilty. Much, but not all, of this took place *on film*.[[24]](#endnote-24) Fellow Jewish actress Shelley Winters,[[25]](#endnote-25) who played Charlotte Haze, felt Sellers was “acting on a different planet […] I never could connect with him”; but when she complained to Kubrick, she said she was politely ignored.[[26]](#endnote-26) As she wrote in her autobiography, “I never felt that anyone was listening to me, except the sound man.”[[27]](#endnote-27) According to *Lolita*’s cinematographer, Oswald Morris, “The most interesting scenes were the ones with Peter Sellers, which were total improvisations. They’d roughly block it out, go upstairs and leave me to light it, then come down with, for instance, the table tennis scene. There was nothing like that in the script, it was just off the cuff.”[[28]](#endnote-28)

The net effect of allowing Sellers free reign to experiment in front of the camera was to greatly expand the role of Quilty. In the novel, Quilty is a barely sketched character: a hazy, veiled, fleeting, shadowy, nebulous, and desultory phantom, he is referenced in oblique allusions and coded wordplay (sometimes in French), as “the lone diner in the loud checks.” He is certainly absent more than he is present.[[29]](#endnote-29) In Nabokov’s screenplay version, he is barely any more realized. Consequently, when Kubrick approached Peter Ustinov, whom he considered casting in the role of Humbert, he wrote, “Quilty will be a mysterious presence […] Every time we catch a glimpse of Quilty we can imagine anything, police, pervert or parent.”[[30]](#endnote-30) Moreover, in his “Outline of ‘Lolita,’” which Kubrick included in his letter to Ustinov, he added, “We will establish in the audience mind with a brief sense the idea that Quilty represents a mysterious and sinister threat of some kind.”[[31]](#endnote-31)

Together, Kubrick and Sellers greatly expanded the character of Quilty, fleshing the bare bones of Nabokov’s creation into the multifaceted performer of the film. Drawing him more boldly, Quilty ended up commanding greater narrative space than Nabokov’s brief sketch. His brief, pithy, and laconic exchanges in the novel are transformed into the anxious, babbling, wise-cracking, quick-talking tics, as Quilty nervously fidgets with his glasses and speaks in broken phrases in a display of verbal diarrhea. Consequently, while Sellers only appeared in 34 minutes of the 154-minute film, he is its ubiquitous, uncanny spirit even when missing, the center of *Lolita*, the absent presence for so much of the film, whether invisible or disguised. As Mario Falsetto noted

The character of Quilty is a major presence in Lolita, perhaps *the* presence, and more often than not viewers feel his presence by his absence. That is, they are most aware of the character when he is not there. *Lolita*’s narrative construction depends on the ways in which this presence is alluded to throughout the film, especially the strategy of excluding Humbert from much of the film’s narrative information.[[32]](#endnote-32)

Even when off-screen he is omnipresent and seemingly omniscient, a precursor to HAL in *2001* (1968),[[33]](#endnote-33) *The Shining*’s (1980) The Overlook Hotel, and Victor Ziegler (Sydney Pollack) in *Eyes Wide Shut*.

Thus, in this way, Kubrick complemented Nabokov’s narrative of sexual infatuation with a young girl by emphasizing Humbert’s obsession with Quilty. (Contrast this with his next film, *Dr Strangelove* (1964), which although taking the hydrogen bomb as its subject, is named after a character who barely occupies any screen time.) This shift in emphasis sanctioned greater scope for Sellers’ unpredictable performance that was, moreover, emphasized by Kubrick’s signature style of long takes and deep focus, providing even more space for Sellers.[[34]](#endnote-34) Since Kubrick had already made the decision to shift Quilty’s death from the end of the novel to the beginning of the film, which Kubrick imagined in the vein of *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941),[[35]](#endnote-35) Quilty’s role as the center of the film was already in place before shooting began. However, the upshot of Sellers’ improvisations was that he ended up playing a shape-shifting character that performs multiple roles – a possibly homosexual state trooper, a shadowy pursuer,[[36]](#endnote-36) a German-émigré high school psychologist called Dr. Zemph, a visiting uncle, and a mysterious unnamed voice on the end of the telephone during the night.[[37]](#endnote-37) At the same time, it also allows greater possibility for reading Jewish, to detect the subsurface, sub-textual and sub-epidermis clues that pepper the film. For example, these improvisations lent the film the quality of early 1960s Jewish stand-up humor, as if one long audio-visual version of a *MAD* magazine parody. Indeed, several critics described Sellers performance as having the feel of a “skit” or “shtick.”[[38]](#endnote-38)

With the expansion of Quilty’s role came the concomitant expansion of the opening sequence. In contrast to Nabokov’s first draft of the screenplay, which described the opening as “a silent shadowy sequence which should not last more than one minute,”[[39]](#endnote-39) Kubrick’s version lasted for almost eleven. In this key sequence, many Jewish clues are provided, whether intentionally or otherwise, by both Kubrick and Sellers.[[40]](#endnote-40) First, Quilty is an expert at mimicry, shifting between characters with chameleonic-like ease, anticipating Woody Allen’s much later creation, Zelig, that curiously nondescript chameleonic Jewish character who is discovered for his remarkable ability to transform himself to resemble anyone he is near as depicted in the film *Zelig* (Woody Allen, 1983).

Although Quilty is a brilliant mimic throughout the course of the film, his mimicking abilities are showcased in the opening sequence. Anticipating the final death throes of the polymorphic Terminator in *T2: Judgment Day* (James Cameron, 1991), which morphs into the different characters it has mimicked throughout the film, before dying, so Quilty cannot stop shifting identities in front of Humbert as he realizes that he is about to be killed. Initially, he plays himself (at least that is what we think he does, although we can never be entirely certain). He then mimics a Texan cowboy (“That’s a derling little thing”), before becoming the hardboiled, tough, jaded cop of a film noir (“Listen, Mac, you’re drunk”).[[41]](#endnote-41) He next dons a pair of boxing gloves before instantly morphing into a librettist and piano player. Finally, fatally wounded, Quilty drags himself up the stairs and crawls behind a life-sized painting of a young girl, which Humbert peppers with bullets. Fittingly perhaps, we do not see him die.

This mimicry, which surely can be described as “undisciplined,” has long been felt to be mark the Jewish condition. For Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, “undisciplined mimicry” was “engraved in the living substance of the dominated and passed down by a process of unconscious imitation in infancy from generation to generation, from the down-at-heel Jew to the rich banker.”[[42]](#endnote-42) This was because “Jewish Emancipation involved Jews in collisions with the differentiations of Western society [and] Jews were being asked, in effect, to become bourgeois, and to become bourgeois quickly,”[[43]](#endnote-43) and simultaneously denounced for intruding where they did not belong. Mimicry was the ideal strategy but it took different forms in different Western bourgeois societies being, arguably, an even more significant strategy in the British (especially the English) context because, unlike the United States, “the social forms and rules of decorum” required “the constant suppression of the ego” and “the impersonation of another identity entirely.” The English Jew/ess had to resort to “wildly inventive” and “chameleonic impersonation,” as required by a society dominated by class prejudices and nuances, that is, undisciplined mimicry.[[44]](#endnote-44)

In a “perfect fit” between real-life and acting role, Sellers’ career to date had largely embodied this trend. As a talented mimic, he had impersonated scores of others during his regular *Goon Show* appearances. He had also already played three different roles in *The Mouse That Roared* (Jack Arnold, 1959). In addition to these various “white” characters, Sellers also mimicked other colonial subjects most prominently in *The Millionairess* (Anthony Asquith, 1960) and *The Party* (Blake Edwards, 1968) in which he browned up to play respectively Ahmed el Kabir, a socialist Indian doctor, and Hrundi V. Bakshi, a hapless Indian film extra who cases chaos on both film sets and at a Hollywood social event.

From the opening sequence in *Lolita*, we learn that Quilty, in addition to being a wisecracking, comical, and obsessively nervous talker, is an uncanny combination of city slicker, witty improviser, playwright, and librettist—all stereotypical defining features of what Michael Rogin has called “Jew is mouth as nervous brain.”[[45]](#endnote-45) Thus one of the first things that we understand about him is that he is defined by intellectual activity rather than his physical properties, manifesting what is known as *Yiddische kopf*” or “Jewish brains,” tapping into a trend, predating the invention of motion pictures, whereby the Jew is defined by his mind. Indeed, Quilty’s suggestion to Humbert, “We could dream up some lyrics, share the profits,” recalls the successful Jewish songwriting partnerships, dating as far back as early-1900s Tin Pan Alley and continuing through 1950s Motown and rock ‘n’ roll.[[46]](#endnote-46)

Further Jewish clues are revealed, as we delve deeper into the opening sequence. We first meet Quilty sitting in a chair, beneath a white shroud, suggesting the *tallit* (prayer shawl) and *kittel* (robe) in which the Orthodox Jewish male prays and is buried (see Figure 1).

{{Place Figure 1 about here}}

Figure 1. Clare Quilty (Peter Sellers) is hidden beneath a white shroud in *Lolita* (1962)

Again this compares to Nabokov’s suggestion of Quilty “in a silk dressing gown, the sash of which he is tying as he goes.”[[47]](#endnote-47) When he is aroused by Humbert, who asks him if he is Quilty, he replies, “No, I’m Spartacus. Have you come to free the slaves or somethin’?”[[48]](#endnote-48) Not only does this refer to Kubrick’s previous film *Spartacus* (1960), but it also obliquely points to the Jewish actor who played the title role – Kirk Douglas – in a film which can be read as a biblical epic that retells, albeit in an alternative form, the Exodus from Egypt with Spartacus liberating the slaves in a Moses-like fashion.[[49]](#endnote-49) And when Quilty realizes that the weapon-wielding Humbert intends to harm him, his initial and unconvincing move, in trying to stay alive, as Mizruchi points out, “is to make sure Humbert knows he is not a Jew”: “You are either Australian or a German refugee. This is a gentile’s house. You’d better run along.”[[50]](#endnote-50) This attempt to hide his Jewishness, to pass, only serves to underline his Jewishness even more for the use of the term “gentile” is the Jewish term for non-Jews. Only a Jew would think to say this because “gentiles” do not think of themselves as gentiles. It recalls a statement, attributed to Kubrick, “Gentiles don’t know how to worry.”[[51]](#endnote-51) Thus Quilty inadvertently reveals that he is a Jew.

{{Place Figure 2 about here}}

Figure 2. Quilty playing ping pong.

Quilty challenges Humbert to a game of ping pong (see Figure 2). After beating a clearly distracted opponent, he puts on a pair of boxing gloves and mimics punching, stating “I wanna die like a champion” (see Figure 3).[[52]](#endnote-52) The choice of both sports, neither of which appears in the novel, seem unlikely to be accidental; Kubrick was a big fan of both sports. Furthermore, behind each sport stretches a long history of Jewish involvement and thus both can be decoded as Jewish clues.[[53]](#endnote-53) Taking place indoors, both were interior sports and hence easier to organize in the face of antisemitic prejudice and the practical problems faced by urban Jewish schools and youth clubs in securing playing fields and pitches. At the same time, Sellers specifically alludes to his maternal great-grandfather Daniel Mendoza, perhaps the greatest boxer of the eighteenth century. A star of his day, he styled himself “Mendoza the Jew.” Mendoza fathered scientific boxing, writing the first ever boxing textbook, *The Art of Boxing*, which stressed diet and training, as well as teaching how to sidestep and other ways of avoiding being hit. He was the first prize-fighter to lay down some proper rules of boxing technique. For the only Jewish boy in a Catholic school in North London, Mendoza probably appeared as an ideal role model to Sellers. Later, in 1960, when he planned to form Sellers-Mankowitz Productions, Ltd., its logo was to be a portrait of Mendoza, which hung in the background of several of his later films. Inspector Clouseau was one of Mendoza’s most fervent admirers and prints of the boxer can clearly be seen on the walls of his apartment in the *Pink Panther* series.[[54]](#endnote-54)

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Figure 3. Quilty dons boxing gloves.

Even when taken on its own the opening sequence alone provides enough material for establishing the subsurface, subliminal Jewishness of Quilty, but his Jewish performativity and hence reading is arguably reinforced throughout the film. Quilty is shown with a camera around his neck and, at one point, ordering his sidekick to fetch some Kodachrome Type A film.[[55]](#endnote-55) Like boxing, Jews also dominated still photography as they did the motion pictures even if the public were less likely to recognize this.[[56]](#endnote-56) Both Kubrick and Sellers were keen photographers and corresponded about cameras and film long after they stopped collaborating. We further learn that Quilty’s main hobby was making “art movies,” which Kubrick explained is “a polite way of saying “pornographic” film,”[[57]](#endnote-57) at his “Duk Duk Ranch” (Duk Duk being an obscene Oriental word for sex, deriving from the Persian *dakk* and *dokhtan*[[58]](#endnote-58)), yet another industry in which Jews were involved on both sides of the Atlantic but particularly in Soho during the 1950s.[[59]](#endnote-59)

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Figure 4. Quilty, the Beatnik

When we see Quilty at the Ramsdale High School prom/summer dance, he is wearing a white dinner jacket and a pair of black-rimmed glasses accompanied by a dark-haired Bohemian beatnik dressed all in black (see Figure 4). Sellers performs/reads as a *MAD*-esque “parody of New York cool.”[[60]](#endnote-60) This is especially the case when he “breaks into alliterative, literary-hipster talk,” as he talks about Lolita:[[61]](#endnote-61) “Lissen, didn’t you have a daughter? Didn’t you have a daughter with a lovely name? Yeah, a lovely, what was it now, a lovely, lilting, lyrical name? … Lolita! Yes, that’s right. Diminutive of Dolores, ‘the tears and the roses’…” The daily continuity report for that sequence noted, “On the change of tempo the beat is taken from the Playback record ‘BEATNIK.’”[[62]](#endnote-62) Sellers, in part, modeled his American accent on that of Jewish jazz impresario Norman Granz who recorded some of Quilty’s dialog for Sellers to study and mimic.[[63]](#endnote-63) Consequently, his speech patterns are reminiscent of such 1960s Jewish literary hipsters as Allen Ginsburg and Lenny Bruce. As Richard Corliss notes, “in the ricochet cadences of Sellers’ delivery, in his nervous repetitions, in the wild range of his allusions, in the competitiveness and defensiveness, in the sense of a performer who is too hip for the room but whose most demanding audience is himself – in the pit of Sellers’ improvisations one can hear echoes of a New York comedian who might have been a great Quilty: Lenny Bruce.”[[64]](#endnote-64) Furthermore, the oversized glasses, which Quilty wears in this sequence, resemble those that became a standard feature of Sellers’ own early 1960s look, and are another coded clue to Quilty’s Jewishness: his “look” plays into the stereotype of Jewish shortsightedness, scholarliness, and nerdiness, which Woody Allen, around this time, began to typify.

Sellers’ sense of parody at the High School dance is carried over when Sellers plays the possibly homosexual state trooper. Here Kubrick and Sellers mock the odd fit between Jew and cop. Stereotypically, the world of the police is seen as one that excludes the Jew. Hannah Arendt described “the traditional Jewish fear of the ‘cop’ – that seeming incarnation of a hostile world.”[[65]](#endnote-65) As a result, self-hatred becomes “the price of acceptance into the police ‘family’” for Jews who have to pose as non-Jewish in order to pass.[[66]](#endnote-66) Consequently, the idea of the Jewish cop is often considered an oxymoron and hence treated as a fertile subject for humor. Masquerading as the state trooper, Quilty is very nervously talkative, his speech revealing his attempt to pass and to make a pass; his multiple references to “normality” suggesting an excess, a trying too hard to be the same but failing, becoming “almost the same, but not quite.”

In this respect, Kubrick and Sellers may have been influenced by Alfred Hitchcock’s *North by Northwest* (1959) in which James Mason played Philip Vandamm. When Roger Thornhill (Cary Grant) is hauled into a police station for drunk driving, he makes a call to his mother. She asks what the cop’s name is and he replies, “Sergeant Emil Klinger.” After a double take, he says with a chuckle, “No. I didn’t believe it either.” Like Kubrick, who once told his wife that the one thing to fear in life is power, Hitchcock had a lifelong fear of the police. In this respect, it is notable that a private detective called “Ben Hirsch,” who has a stereotypically Jewish given and surname (like Klinger), appears in earlier drafts of the *Lolita* screenplay.[[67]](#endnote-67) It also seems that Kubrick shot, or at least rehearsed, a scene with this character, as recalled by Mason: “There was one scene in which Sellers, immersed in the character of Quilty which he was playing, pretended to be an undercover detective for a full nine minutes while poor Humbert Humbert had nothing to do but look uncomfortable.”[[68]](#endnote-68)

Another Kubrick/Sellers invention, the high school psychologist Zemph, provides yet more Jewish clues, as well as a further chance for Sellers “to exhibit his much-touted gift for mimicry.”[[69]](#endnote-69) Appearing neither in the novel nor in Nabokov’s and Kubrick’s various drafts of the screenplay, Sellers had full range to create a character completely of his own devising.[[70]](#endnote-70) The result was what Thomas Allen Nelson called an exaggeration of “Humbert’s European pomposity through his psychobabble and German anality, his thick glasses and the efficient row of pens protruding from his breast pocket.”[[71]](#endnote-71) Many have decoded Zemph as a prototype of one his later characters in his next Kubrick collaboration, the ex-Nazi Dr. Strangelove. But such comparisons miss the clear resemblance to Freud. Zemph’s reference to Lolita’s private jokes of her own that no one else understands subtly invokes Freud’s *Jokes and the Unconscious* (1905), as does his with his blatant concern with Lolita’s developmental health, which he coyly and repeatedly refers to as “the home situation.”[[72]](#endnote-72) The “physician” in general and the psychologist in particular (indeed psychology as a whole—the “talking cure”) has been associated with Jews. Kubrick was an early and enthusiastic fan of Freud and his father was a (homeopathic) physician. Similarly, he can be read as a caricature of various other Jewish émigré figures of the period, including Frederic Wertham, Paul Reich, and Herbert Marcuse, all of whom were writing and in the public eye in the 1950s and early 1960s. Furthermore, Sander Gilman refers to “the quite powerful” image of “the Jew as physician” that haunts antisemitic literature, as well as the work of Jewish physicians such as Arthur Schnitzler of whom Kubrick was fond, having come to his work through the films of Max Ophuls. Kubrick’s favorite writer was Franz Kafka and he may have been influenced here by the Jewish writer’s short story, “A Country Doctor” (1919), in which while the Jewish references are overtly missing, their traces, following Kafka’s reading of Freud’s theory of the dream, are still present.[[73]](#endnote-73)

{{Place Figure 5 about here}}

Figure 5. Quilty as Dr. Zemph draws attention to his own mimicry.

Quilty even draws attention to his own mimicry of Zemph, furtively lifting his thick, oversized glasses in order to light a cigarette since he cannot see what he is doing with them on (see Figure 5). Humbert fails to notice this clear hint. The thick glasses are somewhat similar to those he dons to play President Muffley in *Strangelove*. He is also left-handed, drawing on age-old stereotypes of the Jew as sinister. In medieval art, Jews were always represented as being on the left-hand side of Christ at the Crucifixion, the Devil’s side. Zemph is shot from the side, emphasizing his “Jewish” profile. He offers Humbert a Drome cigarette and suggests that he “keep ze pack” – yet another clue to Zemph’s real identity as Quilty – that Humbert fails to decode despite the poster of Quilty advertising that very brand in Lolita’s room.[[74]](#endnote-74) He also sits in the dark to save Humbert the expense of the electricity – perhaps another clue, pointing to the stereotype of Jewish miserliness and stinginess. Finally, when he says “*schving*” it sounds suspiciously Yiddish.

Surprisingly for someone so attuned to searching for Kubrick’s Jewishness, Geoffrey Cocks, like Humbert, fails to read the clues and thus similarly does not fully exploit the potentialities that Kubrick’s oeuvre offers in this regard. For example, Cocks mentions how Zemph can be interpreted as *Senf*, the German word for mustard, as in “to cut the mustard” sexually, and about how an associate named “Dr. Cutler” can be read as “cuddler,” “geld,” or “cut,” but he misses the implicit Jewish clues here, which he teases out with such tenacity in *The Shining*.[[75]](#endnote-75) Mustard is yellow in color and for centuries yellow has historically connoted Jewishness and institutionalized antisemitism. Originating in England, Jews were ordered to wear distinguishing yellow badges in the medieval period in a variety of European countries. A variety of sumptuary laws in fifteenth century Italy established various markers as Jewish signs, including a circle cut out of yellow cloth for men and a yellow veil for women. A Jewish woman discovered in the street without her distinguishing yellow veil could be publicly stripped (incidentally, this was the sign used elsewhere to mark prostitutes who suffered the same punishment). Rebecca the Jewess in Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe* (1819), adapted into a 1952 film, wears a yellow turban, signifying her Jewish difference. These signs morphed into the yellow Star of David badge of the Nazi period, culminating in the yellow triangle for Jewish camp inmates. In 1942, Soviet film director Sergei Eisenstein wrote an essay on “Color and Meaning,” in which he described yellow as “Nazi revivals of medieval darkness.”[[76]](#endnote-76) Cocks argues that Kubrick would have known the essay very well.[[77]](#endnote-77) As for “cutting the mustard,” “cut” is often a euphemism for circumcision, a practice historically associated with Jews.[[78]](#endnote-78)

Later, when on the telephone to Humbert, Quilty says, “My name is really obscure and unremarkable.” Roland Barthes, however, emphasized the proper name as “the prince of signifiers; whose connotations are rich, social and symbolic.”[[79]](#endnote-79) Both Quilty’s given and surname are replete with allusion. As Cocks has pointed out, his surname suggests “guilt/guilty,” “quill,” (writer), and “quilt” (patchwork), all features which define the Jew.[[80]](#endnote-80) His first name, already noted for being ambiguous in its gender, further reinforces his sexual ambiguity/ambivalence, as well as suggesting the very opposite of its French homophone, *clair* or “clear” (itself an anagram of Clare). It might also indicate “clearly guilty” or a “clear text.” “Quilt” suggests “stitching and weaving, the joining together of layers of fabric; in other words, a signifier with connotations of the word textile – and hence text.”[[81]](#endnote-81) A quilt also suggests many layers like the disguises of Quilty. As quilts, stitching, and weaving are all conventionally a “woman’s” activity, it is thus another effeminate association of Quilty with the Jewish male stereotype. Textiles, or *schmattes* (Yiddish), are another common Jewish signifier, given Jews’ longstanding, disproportionate involvement in the garment trade.[[82]](#endnote-82)

**Parodying, Reversing, or Reinforcing Stereotypes**

If one takes Quilty’s various attributes as Jewishly coded, then his character and especially the way Sellers portrays him suggest a potentially reading of him as a villainous, if not diabolical, Jewish pervert (or “prevert” to appropriate a term from his next film with Kubrick). In the novel, Quilty’s lifestyle is described by Lolita as “all drink and drugs. And of course, he was a complete freak in sex matters.”[[83]](#endnote-83) Sellers’ Quilty is sybaritic and louche. He has had affairs with Charlotte Haze, Lolita, and Vivian Darkbloom (an anagram of Vladimir Nabokov, which can also be “read as a cross-gendered if sinister version of the half-Jewish Leopold Bloom from *Ulysses*”[[84]](#endnote-84)). Quilty is a sadistic and gratuitous torturer of the increasingly desperate and paranoid Humbert; for example, his masquerade as the state trooper, like the phone call, fulfills no narrative function except to show Quilty’s cruelty. Quilty both wants Lolita *and* to torment Humbert. His discarding of both mother and daughter is done for the self-gratification of his own ego. He has no superego; he is all Id.[[85]](#endnote-85) Charlotte discovers the “monster” within Humbert but never within Quilty. Neither does Humbert until explicitly told by Lolita.

Similarly problematic is the film’s suggestion, as indicated previously, that Quilty is bisexual, or at least sexually ambiguous. Quilty’s first name, Clare, is androgynous. He is feminized in both film and novel, referred to as “Aunt Clare,” portrayed as being overtly camp, and the summer camp that Lolita attends is named “Camp Q.” Lolita tells Humbert in the novel: “Sometimes […] you are quite revoltingly dumb. First, Vivian is the male author, the gal author is Clare.” It is not clear where to locate Quilty’s polymorphous perversity but certainly the dialogue offers many suggestive clues. Quilty introduces such innuendo at the very beginning of the film when he suggests a game of table tennis, in which a testicular ping pong ball is batted back and forth while Humbert holds a phallic gun. During the game he says to Humbert: “I’ll take the service again, if you don’t mind. I sort of like to have it up this end.” Later, at the Enchanted Hunters Hotel, Quilty engages the hotel receptionist, George Swine (William Greene), in a very loaded conversation, similarly replete with sexual double entendres. It is significant in this respect, then, that the casting notes on Greene, who George Swine, describe him as “T[all] U.S. homosexucual [sic] – from Georgia good looking.”[[86]](#endnote-86) Certainly, Monsignor Little of the Catholic Legion of Decency felt that the tone between the men in this scene blatantly portrayed a homosexual advance.[[87]](#endnote-87) Again, when Humbert and Quilty meet on the porch that evening, their encounter can be interpreted as homoerotic, homosocial, and homosexual. As a delegate to the police convention, Quilty is nervous and slightly effeminate. Assuming a passive posture, he bends over the rail of the dark veranda of the hotel, but keeps his back to Humbert. His near obsessive repetition of the word “normal” five times serves to undermine that very normality by its very excessiveness.[[88]](#endnote-88)

At other times Quilty is androgynous, or cross-dressing. The first instance is when he hides behind the Gainsborough-like portrait of the young woman at the very outset of the film. In one version of the screenplay, Quilty plays the part of Miss Pratt, Beardsley College’s headmistress – described in the novel as a “huge woman, grey-haired, frowsy, with a broad flat nose and small eyes behind black-rimmed glasses” – in drag.[[89]](#endnote-89) In fact, this was the plan up until actual shooting took place. The Daily Production Progress Report for February 3rd, 1961 noted: “Extra Hairdresser engaged for today to tend and dress Peter Sellers wig […] In view of re-editing the Mrs. Pratt sequence, Director rehearsed extensively during the afternoon.”[[90]](#endnote-90) Three days later, however, Pratt was discarded and Zemph inserted. The report for February 6th, 1961 noted: “A short delay a.m. as suit had to be sent for and make-up changed as Peter Sellers now playing the part of Dr. Zemph instead of Mrs. Pratt, thereby necessitating a change of costume and make-up.”[[91]](#endnote-91) Furthermore, it is clear from the screenplay, dated October 31st, 1960, that Zemph voices what remains of Pratt’s dialog.[[92]](#endnote-92) It was also possible that Sellers was planning to burlesque a psychopathologist who appeared in an earlier draft. Named Dr. Blanche Schwarzman, her surname suggests Jewish ethnicity and both names hint at Nabokov and Kubrick’s twin chess obsessions given that her name literally translates as “White Blackman.”[[93]](#endnote-93) Another clear association with Blanche Schwarzman as “White Blackman” is its bi-racial aspect, which, given Jews’ historical identification with blacks, adds another (hypersexual) Jewish aspect. At the last minute, however, according to Kubrick’s business partner and producer James B. Harris, Sellers, and Kubrick agreed that it was “a bit too broad (no pun intended)” to have Quilty impersonate a woman so this idea was abandoned and the character of Zemph “was more or less invented on the spot.”[[94]](#endnote-94) Nevertheless, negatives for stills in the archives, as well as some miniature prints accompanying them, show how Sellers appeared in the role.[[95]](#endnote-95)

Whether intentionally or otherwise, these various traits fit into the antisemitic stereotype of the sexually deviant Jew, who is portrayed as predatory, sleazy, and sex-obsessed. This Jew was the product of the antisemitic imagination, circulated through Christian theology, medieval anti-Jewish polemics, religious art and latterly antisemitic propaganda. In pre-modern times, for example, the Jew was viewed, similar to other marginalized groups, as “primitive, more fully sexual, impulsive and hyperphallic,” on the one hand, and “unmanly, weak, effeminate or otherwise outside the norm of properly assertive masculinity,” on the other.[[96]](#endnote-96) He was, simultaneously, a sexually predatory monster (the Jew-Devil) and a castrated effeminate (the Jew-Sissy).[[97]](#endnote-97) In the antisemitic literature of the late nineteenth century, much of which was rooted in medieval anti-Jewish polemics, Jews were “either seen as debased lechers yearning for Christian girls (preferably virgins) or as men-women.”[[98]](#endnote-98) This “cultural contradiction was ameliorated when the two merged into a new character type: the Jewish pervert, a figure that conjoined the will-to-power of the hyperaggressive Jewish male with sexual nonnormativity of the feminized Jewish man.”[[99]](#endnote-99) Such a figure was embodied by the “seductive and dangerous” Joseph Süss Oppenheimer (Ferdinand Marian) the protagonist of the notorious Nazi propaganda film, *Jud Süss* (Veit Harlan, 1940), which was directed by Kubrick’s third wife’s uncle.[[100]](#endnote-100) Married to Harlan’s niece, Kubrick had met Harlan in 1957 and wanted to make a film about him, and Cocks suggests that “Kubrick’s antennae thus must have been especially attuned to the critical vibrations in the Harlan family caused by sorrow and outrage over Veit Harlan’s close collaboration with the Nazi cultural and political elite.”[[101]](#endnote-101) Kubrick’s ancestors emigrated from Poland around 1900; the Kubricks (originally Kubrik) lived in the heavily Jewish West Bronx. Stanley, born in 1928, grew up in the age of Hitler and Auschwitz that created or heightened the sense of threat in the world central in his films: this trope in his films from *Lolita* through *The Shining* of a child confronting a world of danger.[[102]](#endnote-102)

Kubrick/Sellers’ Quilty also resembles the antisemitic stereotypes of Victorian English literature especially. He mirrors Mr. Isaacs, the cruelly caricatured Jewish theatre manager in Oscar Wilde’s 1891 novel *The Picture of Dorian Grey* – a sexual predator who controls the fate of the Christian heroine, Sibyl Vane – as well as *Oliver Twist*’s Fagin, whose implied sexual deviancy towards children parallels Quilty’s perversions. But even more so, Quilty can be read very much as a reincarnation of Svengali, that infamous literary embodiment of nineteenth-century English hatred of the Jew as a dirty, sinister and predatory figure, selfishly manipulating the innocent, the antagonist of George du Maurier’s *Trilby* (1895), and adapted into the 1954 film *Svengali* (Noel Langley).[[103]](#endnote-103) As Margaret Stetz has argued, less than ten years after the Holocaust and the Nuremberg Trials, British audiences were treated through this film to a rewriting of history through the spectacle of an innocent, blonde, hyper-Aryan German girl victimized, exploited, and terrorized by a figure well known to be a Jew.[[104]](#endnote-104) Like Svengali, Quilty is a hypersexual Jewish pervert, corrupting a gentile Christian woman. Quilty uses Lolita, throwing her away when he is done, in comparison to Humbert who really loves her, as Kubrick presented him.

Corliss compares Quilty to Arthur Conan Doyle’s Moriaty or Bram Stoker’s Dracula.[[105]](#endnote-105) Such comparisons inadvertently add to the weight of a reading of Quilty as Jewish. Scholars have noted the implicit, subsurface Jewishness of Dracula, the characterization of whom would be understood by contemporary audiences, as Jewish, whether explicitly revealed or otherwise.[[106]](#endnote-106) Similarly, if we turn to Sherlock Holmes” description of Moriarty, in Conan Doyle’s “The Final Problem,” there are clear echoes of antisemitic descriptions of “the Jew” finding its traces within the text.

But the man had hereditary tendencies of the most diabolical kind. A criminal strain ran in his blood, which, instead of being modified, was increased and rendered infinitely more dangerous by his extraordinary mental powers […] He is the Napoleon of crime, Watson. He is the organizer of half that is evil and of nearly all that is undetected in this great city. He is a genius, a philosopher, an abstract thinker. He has a brain of the first order. He sits motionless, like a spider in the center of its web, but that web has a thousand radiations, and he knows well every quiver of each of them. He does little himself. He only plans. But his agents are numerous and splendidly organized.[[107]](#endnote-107)

Allegedly, Conan Doyle based Moriarty on Adam Worth (1844-1902) a German-born Jewish criminal who operated in America and Britain, and who was nicknamed him “the Napoleon of the criminal world” and “the Napoleon of Crime.”[[108]](#endnote-108) Worth stole the painting *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*, by Thomas Gainsborough (1787), in 1876, a picture bearing strong similarity to that behind which Quilty hides for cover when shot at by Humbert.[[109]](#endnote-109)

**Kubrick/Quilty**

According to Michel Ciment, Quilty represents one of Kubrick’s most deeply rooted obsessions: the double.[[110]](#endnote-110) Quilty is Humbert’s “grotesque alter ego and parodic Double”[[111]](#endnote-111) just as Humbert Humbert is a double name.[[112]](#endnote-112) At the same time, it has been suggested that Kubrick saw himself in Quilty. Jerold J. Abrams wrote:

Stanley Kubrick identifies with “the Hamlet-changeling director character of Quilty, the smartest man in the play who is always controlling the action, always the Minotaur hidden behind the scenes. They are directing the game, just as Quilty is directing the game of “Roman Ping-Pong” at the beginning of the film and every subsequent game that Humbert loses. And when they recede back behind the scenes, after momentary involutions, we know that they are only temporarily masked behind Quilty, whose mask is always changing – sometimes a policeman, sometimes Kubrick himself.[[113]](#endnote-113)

Perhaps, then, we should rewrite the relationship: Humbert Humbert was his own double just as Quilty was Kubrick’s double.

Nabokov’s description of Quilty certainly shares many characteristics with Kubrick. “Born in Ocean City, NJ. Educated at Columbia University. Started on a commercial career but turned to playwriting […] Hobbies: fast cars, photography, pets.”[[114]](#endnote-114) Born in the Bronx, Kubrick audited classes at Columbia University, being taught by such luminaries as Lionel Trilling. In fact, it was Trilling’s review of *Lolita* in *Encounter* that helped Kubrick to shape the story. [[115]](#endnote-115) Kubrick began his early photography career with *Look* magazine before turning to filmmaking. He owned various fast cars, dogs and cats.[[116]](#endnote-116) Throughout the novel, Quilty is referred to as “Cue” or “Q” and Kubrick’s family insisted their name be pronounced as *Que*-brick rather than Koo-brick.[[117]](#endnote-117)

These somewhat superficial similarities are reinforced in the film. As mentioned above, Quilty’s first action is to challenge Humbert to a game of Ping-Pong, which Kubrick often played in real life as recreation. Stills from the set in the Kubrick Archives show that Sue Lyon, Mason, and Sellers all played between takes even if Mason claimed in his autobiography that he was the inspiration for this: “He [Kubrick] asked me if I could think of any times that could be introduced which would suggest the bizarre lifestyle of Quilty, its present occupant. I said that a ping-pong table beneath the principal chandelier might look nicely incongruous. But I certainly did not imagine that he would ask us to play on it.”[[118]](#endnote-118) Kubrick was also a passionate boxing fan. Prior to *Lolita* he had photographed the sport for *Look*. His first film was a documentary about prize-fighter Walter Cartier, *The Day of the Fight* (1951). His second feature film, *Killer’s Kiss* (1953), also focused on a fighter. In several of his appearances Quilty wears a 35mm still camera strapped around his neck (see Figure 6), much like the one Kubrick can be seen wearing in behind-the-scenes publicity shots taken during the production of the film. Quilty’s friend, Jack Brewster, is played by James Harris. Using a distinct Bronx accent, Quilty orders him to “Go and get some Type-A Kodrachrome” film for him (see Figure 6). Kubrick’s first wife, Toba Metz, was certainly the dark-haired enigmatic-looking beauty, resembling to an extent, Quilty’s silent companion Vivian Darkbloom who, in turn, “bears a striking resemblance to another non-speaking character playing in a Kubrick film, Iris, the ballet dancer in *Killer’s Kiss*, played by Kubrick’s second wife, Ruth Sobotka.”[[119]](#endnote-119) Naremore also observed, “Although he’s a far more dapper fellow than Kubrick, he has the same aura of New York artistic-ness, and his female companion is a comic stereotype of the sort of Greenwich Village women Kubrick knew in his youth” and hung out with and married such as Sobotka.[[120]](#endnote-120) Kubrick and Sellers shared a love of photography and home movie making and they would often photograph each other at work.[[121]](#endnote-121) Sellers and Kubrick corresponded about cameras and film long after they ceased working together.[[122]](#endnote-122)

{{Place Figure 6 about here}}

Figure 6. Quilty wearing a camera, flanked by Vivian Darkbloom (Marianne Stone) and Jack Brewster (James B. Harris).

Like Kubrick, Quilty is a film director (albeit of sorts). At any rate he has had experience in Hollywood and wants to put Lolita in an “art movie.” His first words to Humbert are a reference to Kubrick’s recently completed *Spartacus*. Quilty makes porn films. *Lolita* as a novel was considered to be pornography and had Kubrick chosen to include the erotic detail of it in his film then it too would have had a pornographic effect. Although Harris said, “being explicit was never of any interest to us,”[[123]](#endnote-123) this was surely less for moral reasons than motivated by expediency in order to get the film past the censors.

In addition to Granz, IMDB reports that Sellers modeled his accent on Kubrick’s. Naremore agrees: “I suspect that at times he was also imitating Stanley Kubrick.”[[124]](#endnote-124) As aforementioned, the way Sellers talks, is at times also reminiscent of such 1960s Jewish literary hipsters as Ginsberg and Bruce. Michael Herr, who collaborated with Kubrick on the screenplay for *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), felt that Kubrick’s personality even resembled Bruce’s.[[125]](#endnote-125) It is also significant that Sellers was in part mimicking the jazz impresario Granz. As a teenager Kubrick had been passionate about jazz – Herr described him as “jazz-mad” – and he hoped to progress from playing drums with the Taft [High School] Swing Band.[[126]](#endnote-126) Incidentally, at the school dance we learn that Quilty has an uncle Ivor who is a dentist: both a common Jewish name and profession. Kubrick’s own uncle was the owner of a profitable pharmacy.

Like Quilty, Kubrick is ubiquitous, an uncanny presence, even when absent, the center of *Lolita*, the absent presence for so much of the film. Kubrick, in Ariadne-esque fashion, leaves us a trail of crumbs that lead to a possible (albeit not certain) encoding of this particular Minotaur. As if to guide us, in the sequence in which Humbert enters Quilty’s mansion, a figure can be briefly seen walking across the set from the center of the screen to its right bottom (see Figure 7). As one critic wrote to Kubrick, “I swear to this day, there is a man jumping out of camera range seen almost subliminally when Mason first enters Sellers’ castle-like residence at the beginning of the picture; how could you allow such a colossal goof to pass?”[[127]](#endnote-127) IMDB suggests that it is Kubrick himself, inadvertently or deliberately interpolating himself into the opening scene.[[128]](#endnote-128) Given Kubrick’s attention to detail and supervision of the final edit, it is unlikely that he missed this slip.

{{Place Figure 7 about here}}

Figure 7. An enigmatic figure (Kubrick?) crosses the screen in *Lolita*.

**Conclusion**

It is hard not to read the characterization of Quilty as absolutely intentional, an inside joke, or a series of jokes, about Jews as Jews, and stereotypes of Jews, but on a sub-epidermis level. Kubrick sanctioned Sellers’ improvised and mercurial performance which, in turn, betrayed a subsurface ethnicity that both actor and director shared. However, where previously the Jewish characters that Sellers had played, such as those on the *Goon Show*, were “oy-vay caricatures, with names like Geraldo or Izzy,” Kubrick coached a much more nuanced, in Jewish terms at least, performance from Sellers.[[129]](#endnote-129) Yet, in so doing, an unresolved tension between the Jewishness of Kubrick and Sellers and the intentionality behind the potentially antisemitic character they created remains. For Jews able to read the signs maybe it is attributable to playfulness or a reversal of stereotypes. An ignorance of Jewishness, or worse a form of self-hatred, seems to be too easy an answer. Alternatively, Kubrick seemingly sensed something in the novel’s characterization of Quilty that struck a chord and resounded as Jewish hence his casting of Sellers in the first place. In so doing, it is even possible that Kubrick uncovered a facet of the novel of which even Nabokov was unaware, a detail folded into the author’s description of Quilty as a “semi-animated subhuman trickster,” which Kubrick’s keen eye picked up and amplified.[[130]](#endnote-130)

Furthermore, if, as has been argued, Kubrick did encode Jewish clues in *Lolita*, its significance lies in the fact that his engagement with *Lolita* was crucial to his career as a whole. Before *Spartacus*, Kubrick was a commercial failure; with *Spartacus* he became major player, albeit, and somewhat ironically, without full control. *Lolita*, however,was truly his first film in which he was able to stamp his authorial signature, as well as work out his auteurist style, and hence was the major turning point in his career, setting the pattern for what came after. As Alan Spiegel observed, “*Lolita* is Kubrick’s first film with a strong contemporary ‘look’ and an individuality of attitude that sets it apart from his preceding films.”[[131]](#endnote-131) Alfred Appel, Jr. certainly felt that *Lolita* “may well be a declaration of independence” and that it had a “valedictory” feel.[[132]](#endnote-132) If Kubrick “directed Jewish” in this film – albeit in a submerged fashion – thus allowing us to “read Jewish,” it is then surely equally applicable for the remainder of his oeuvre. *Lolita* thus also provides a glimpse of how Jewishness can meaningfully pertain in Kubrick’s other films. Close scrutiny of Kubrick’s work indicates that multiple and consistent, albeit coded, clues, which allow us to “read Jewish” in his films, can be traced throughout his entire canon.

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   Geoffrey Cocks, “Indirected by Stanly Kubrick,” *Post Script* 32, no. 2 (2013): 24; Frederic Raphael, *Eyes wide open: a memoir of Stanley Kubrick* (London: Ballantine Books, 1999). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ella Shohat, “Ethnicities-in-Relation: Toward a Multicultural Reading of American Cinema,” in *Unspeakable Images: Ethnicity and the American Cinema*, ed. Lester D. Friedman (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 220. Kubrick also retained Jewish characters at times, for example, Private Meyer in *Paths of Glory* (1957), David the Jew in *Spartacus* (1960), and Lieutenant Goldberg in *Dr. Strangelove* (1964). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Henry Bial, *Acting Jewish: Negotiating Ethnicity on the American Stage and Screen* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2005); Nathan Abrams, *The New Jew in Film: Exploring Jewishness and Judaism in Contemporary Cinema* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012). [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Jon Stratton, *Coming Out Jewish* (London: Routledge, 2000), 300. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Bial, *Acting*, 70. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Joel Rosenberg, “Jewish Experience on Film – An American Overview,” in *American Jewish Year Book, 1996* (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 1996), 26. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Bial, *Acting*, 70. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Jerold J. Abrams, “The Logic of *Lolita*: Kubrick, Nabokov, and Poe”, in *The Philosophy of Stanley Kubrick*, ed. Jerold J. Abrams (Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 2007), 122. See also Susan L. Mizruchi, “Lolita in History,” *American Literature* 75, no. 3 (September 2003): 629-652; Andrea Pitzer, *The Secret History of Vladimir Nabokov* (New York: Pegasus, 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. This approach suggests Jacques Derrida’s notion of the “trace” here which (1976) has implications of “track, footprint, imprint.” Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976). It is tempting to leap ahead to a line in *The Shining* here in which Hallorann (Scatman Carruthers) tells Danny (Danny Lloyd): Well, you know Doc, when something happens it can leave a trace of itself behind... say like is someone burns toast.” [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Steven Price, *A History of the Screenplay* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. It should be noted here that I am not saying Nabokov did this but that Kubrick amplified aspects of the novel for his own purposes. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. One could also read the characters of Humbert Humbert and Charlotte Haze in a similar fashion. However, they have been omitted for reasons of space. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. I have taken this phrase from Shohat, “Ethnicities-in-Relation,” 215. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. James Naremore, *On Kubrick* (London: BFI, 2007), 109. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Roger Lewis, *The Life and Death of Peter Sellers* (London: Arrow Books, 1994), 45-48. Like Sellers, Kubrick also did not have a bar mitzvah, although Kaddish was read at his memorial service. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. “Yet another face for Peter Sellers,” *The Jewish Chronicle*, November 20, 1959, 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Rosenberg, “Jewish Experience,” 26. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Stanley Kubrick to Peter Ustinov, May 20th, 1960, SK/10/8/4, Stanley Kubrick Archives, University of the Arts, London (hereafter “SKA”). [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Robert P. Stam, *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Adaptation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 230. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. James Mason, *Before I Forget* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981), 320. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Ibid., 318. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Gene D. Philips, “*Lolita*,” in *The Stanley Kubrick Archives*, ed. Alison Castle, (Köln and Los Angeles: Taschen, 2005), 328. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Vincent LoBrutto, *Stanley Kubrick: a biography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), 205. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. LoBrutto *Stanley Kubrick*, 205-6; Richard Corliss, *Lolita* (London: BFI, 2008), 47. The pre-production script closest to shooting indicates that very little of Quilty’s dialogue was locked down at this stage, suggesting that much, but not all, of it was improvised. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. This was yet another interesting and significant casting choice; Winters’s Jewishness was also, I would argue, important to her casting. There are many possible ways and “coded clues” to reading her character/performance as Jewish but, for reasons of space will not be explored here, suffice to say that she won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for *The Diary of Anne Frank* (George Stevens, 1959) only two years earlier. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Shelley Winters, *Best of Times, Worst of Times* (London: Muller, 1990), 349. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Oswald Morris, quoted in LoBrutto, *Stanley Kubrick*, 205. The production materials in the archives verify this claim. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Greg Jenkins, *Stanley Kubrick and the art of adaptation: three novels, three films* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1997), 51; Ed Sikov, *Mr. Strangelove: A Biography of Peter Sellers* (New York; Hyperion, 2002), 163. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Kubrick to Peter Ustinov, May 20, 1960, SK/10/8/4, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. “Outline of “’Lolita’” included with ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Mario Falsetto, *Stanley Kubrick: a narrative and stylistic analysis* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 10-11. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. HAL in *2001* can be read as Quilty’s double to some extent: HAL’s own sexuality has been the subject of much speculation. HAL is David Bowman’s doppelganger shadow until, like Humbert, Dave kills him. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Stam, *Literature*, 230. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Kubrick to Ustinov, May 20, 1960, SK/10/8/4, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Again, the ambulism which marks the second half of the film, as Quilty trails Humbert and Lolita, invokes the myth of the Wandering Jew. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Kubrick to Ustinov, May 20, 1960, SK/10/8/4, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Naremore referred to Sellers’ “increasingly flamboyant *schtik* [sic]” and Corliss wrote, “So Sellers’ four major scenes with Mason – at the Quilty mansion, at the Enchanted Hunters, in Humbert’s Beardsley home, and in a phone call to Humbert’s motel room – have the feeling so skits, showcases for the star.” Naremore, *On Kubrick*, 112; Corliss, *Lolita*, 47-48. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Nabokov, “Lolita: a screenplay,” n.d., Berg Coll MSS Nabokov, New York Public Library, New York. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. It appears that much of what takes place during the opening sequence was improvised during shooting. In what seems to be the final script prior to shooting, Quilty slowly descends a staircase, tying the sash of a silk dressing gown. This action has been entirely removed and replaced by the table tennis sequence. While some elements of the original dialogue remain, much of what made it into the film was not scripted by that point. Examples include the *Spartacus* line, the boxing gloves, and the mimicry. *Lolita* Screenplay, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/26, SKA. Furthermore, in the breakdown copy, based on this script, props do not list the boxing gloves or ping pong table, indicating they may well both be improvisations during shooting. *Lolita* – Breakdown Copy, based on script, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/25, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. It is significant, in this respect, that there is only one stage direction in the screenplay, “(imitating underworld numbskull)” when Quilty says “that’s a swell little gun you’ve got there,” suggesting that the rest is Sellers’ invention. *Lolita* Screenplay, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/26, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (London: Allen Lane, 1973), 182. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. John Murray Cuddihy, *The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Lévi-Strauss, and the Jewish Struggle with Modernity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978), 12-13. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Lee Siegel, *Not Remotely Controlled: Notes on Television* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 89. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Michael Rogin, *Independence Day* (London: BFI 1998), 49. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. See Michael Billig, *Rock ‘n’ Roll Jews* (Nottingham: Five Leaves, 2000). [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Nabokov, “Lolita: a screenplay,” Berg. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. One cannot help wondering if this line was, in part, influenced by Billy Wilder’s 1961 black comedy, *One, Two, Three*, which lampoons corporate capitalism, communism, Coca-Colonization, as well as the lack of de-Nazification in West Germany, and itself contains a very Jewish sensibility. At one point, the young East German idealist, Otto, bursts into room wearing only boxers, shirt, tie and morning coat. He says, “You know what the first thing is I’m going to do? I’m going to lead the workers down there in revolt!” to which C.R. MacNamara ripostes: “Put your pants on, Spartacus!” [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Tellingly, in this respect, Dalton Trumbo worked as a scriptwriter on both *Spartacus* and *Exodus* (Otto Preminger, 1960). [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Mizruchi, “*Lolita*,” 639. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Michael Herr, “Kubrick,” *Vanity Fair* (August 1999), <http://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/classic/features/kubrick-199908>. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. This was improvised on set during rehearsal. The breakdown copy, based on the script dated October 31, 1960, did not list boxing gloves (SK/10/1/25, SKA). However, the Daily Production Progress Report for January 26, 1961 reported “5 extra pairs of boxing gloves requested by the Director at closing time for tomorrow’s shooting.” “Lolita daily production progress reports,” November 22, 1960-March 29, 1961, SK/10/3/2, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Table tennis had a long history of Jewish involvement, spawning such champions as the Americans Dick Miles and Marty Reisman, Hungarian Victor Barna, and the British Ivor Montagu, among others. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Sikov, *Mr. Strangelove*, 150, 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. This was yet another of Sellers’ ad libs that departed from the final script before shooting. *Lolita* Screenplay, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/26, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Two Jewish musicians invented Kodachrome, for example. Lacking the restrictions of other professions, and requiring little financial capital, poor Jews perceived the trade as another quick and easy way out of poverty. According to Michael Berkowitz, “From the 1850s to the 1950s, if one’s picture was snapped for a price, there was a good chance that the person behind the lens was born a Jew.” Jews with cameras around their necks, enticing customers in the street and public squares to have their photo taken, were a fairly common sight in Britain. At the same time, Jews in photography themselves encouraged “ethnic obfuscation by adopting monikers that did not sound so, well, Jewish” like Clare Quilty. Michael Berkowitz, “Jewish questions lurking in *Peeping Tom* (1960),” in Nathan Abrams, ed., *Hidden in Plain Sight: Jews and Jewishness in British Popular Culture* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, forthcoming). [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. “Lolita” Dialogue Continuity, September 1961, labelled “S. Kubrick corrected copy” [containing notes to translators and dubbing directors], SK/10/3/3, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Alfred Appel, Jr, *The annotated “Lolita”* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 428. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. See Nathan Abrams, ed., *Jews & Sex* (Nottingham: Five Leaves, 2008). Later, Anthony Frewin, who was Kubrick’s personal assistant for many years, wrote a novel about pornography and photography in Soho entitled *London Blues* (1994). [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. John Baxter, *Stanley Kubrick: A Biography* (New York: HarperCollins, 1998), 158. Again, *MAD Magazine* was, in the words of Nathan Abrams, very much “humour in a Jewish vein.” See his “From Madness to Dysentery: *Mad*’s Other New York Intellectuals,” *Journal of American Studies* 37, no. 3 (2003): 439. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Naremore, *On Kubrick*, 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. *Lolita* Daily Continuity Reports, January 5, 1961, SK/10/3/4, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. LoBrutto, *Stanley Kubrick*, 204. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Corliss, *Lolita*, 47. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Hannah Arendt, “The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition,” *Jewish Social Studies* 6 (1944): 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Laurence Roth, *Inspecting Jews: American Jewish Detective Stories* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 182. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. “Annotated Screenplay,” c. 1960, SK/10/1/4, SKA; “Corrected rough 1st draft”, c. September 9, 1959-October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/23, SKA, Lolita – Breakdown Copy, based on script October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/25, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Mason, *Before*, 318. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Jenkins, *Stanley Kubrick*, 57. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. There was no Zemph, for example, in the final draft completed before shooting began: *Lolita* Screenplay, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/26, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Thomas Allen Nelson, *Kubrick, Inside a Film Artist’s Maze* (New and expanded edn. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 81. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. Later, as an unnamed man on the telephone who calls Humbert in the middle of the night, Quilty invokes Kinsey and refers to “Freudian lingo.” [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. Sander L. Gilman, *Jewish Frontiers: Essays on Bodies, Histories, and Identities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 146. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. In this respect, Humbert may also represent the general viewer. Quilty is almost always smoking in the film; indeed, when we first meet him, his house is littered with overflowing ashtrays. Gilman points out that how “there is a strange but powerful association of Jews in European and beyond with smoking tobacco” leading to “a strong association of smoking as a sign of Jewish difference.” Gilman, *Jewish Frontiers*, 96, 100. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. Geoffrey Cocks, *The wolf at the door: Stanley Kubrick, history, & the Holocaust* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 102. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. Cited in ibid., 82. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. Cited in Patrick Webster, *Love and Death in Kubrick: A Critical Study of the Films from Lolita through Eyes Wide Shut* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011),94. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. Cocks, *Wolf*, 102. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. Webster, *Love*,26. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. With reference to textiles, it is worth mentioning here the Jewish custom of “shaatnez,” an Orthodox religious proscription against mixing wool and linen, which, similar to the dietary law against mixing meat and dairy, is rejected for bringing together incompatible opposites. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. Nabokov, *Lolita*, 273. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. Webster, *Love*,270 n. 86. There are many Joycean references in the novel. Coincidentally, or otherwise, the *London Evening News* (July 2, 1962) reported that Sellers had signed up to play Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses* following *Lolita*, SK/10/6/3i, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. Echoing this, when Woody Allen’s character in his *To Rome with Love* (2012) claims that the Id-Ego-Superego model does not work with him, his psychologist wife retorts, “No, you’re three parts Id!” [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. “Artists interviewed re ‘Lolita,’” October 13, 1960,” SK/10/2/4, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. Lobrutto, *Stanley Kubrick*, 220. This sequence is does not appear in the final script prior to shooting, *Lolita* Screenplay, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/26, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. The filmed version plays out very differently from that depicted in the final screenplay prior to production: “Humbert sits on a rocker about one foot from the corner of the porch. The camera sees around the corner out of Humbert’s sight, the figure of a man seat completely in shadow. We cannot recognize him. It is Clare Quilty.” The conversation between them is very short: Quilty utters only seven lines, all of them offscreen. None of the nervous talkativeness that marks Sellers’ Quilty or the mention of “normal” were present. *Lolita* Screenplay, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/26, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. “Corrected rough 1st draft,” c. September 9, 1959-October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/23, SKA; Nabokov, *Lolita*, 203. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. *Lolita* Daily Production Progress Report, February 3, 1961, SK/10/3/2, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. Ibid., February 6, 1961, SK/10/3/2, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. *Lolita* Screenplay, October 31, 1960, SK/10/1/26, SKA. See also Jenkins, *Stanley Kubrick*, 57. The version of the screenplay featuring Pratt magnifies the sinister and manipulative effect of this sequence, which is to get Lolita into the school play so Quilty can abuse her. In contrast, Pratt has Lolita’s best interests in mind. The shift is also intensified by the change in mise en scene: from the interior of the principal’s office during daylight to the darkened interior of Humbert’s home (Zemph does not switch on the light). [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. Part Screenplay, c1959-1960, SK10/1/3, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. James B. Harris, cited in Castle, ed., *Archives*, 333. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. Negatives, c1960-1961, SK/10/9/2, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. # Jonathan Freedman, “Miller, Monroe and the Remaking of Jewish Masculinity,” in

    # *Arthur Miller’s America: Theater and Culture in a Time of Change*, ed. Enoch

    # Brater (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 137.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. Matthew Biberman, *Masculinity, Anti-Semitism and Early Modern English Literature: From the Satanic to the Effeminate Jew* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004). [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. # Freedman, “Miller”, 137.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. # Ibid.

    [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
100. Lutz Koepnick, “Reframing the Past: Heritage Cinema and Holocaust in the 1990s,” *New German Critique* 87 (2002): 62. The Nazi film *Jud Süss*, it should be mentioned, was an adaptation (or better, perversion) of the novel by the Jewish writer Leon Feuchtwanger. [↑](#endnote-ref-100)
101. Cocks, *Wolf*, 70. [↑](#endnote-ref-101)
102. Cocks, “Indirected,” 26- 27, 31. [↑](#endnote-ref-102)
103. Significantly Nabokov suggests that Humbert is the Svengali figure, who, in the novel, adopts a pseudonym of “Mesmer Mesmer,” being a short form of mesmerism at which Svengali excelled. However, Kubrick downplayed this aspect, choosing to present Humbert as seemingly more mesmerised by Lolita than mesmerizing her. I would like to thank Danielle Friel for this observation. [↑](#endnote-ref-103)
104. Margaret D. Stetz, “The hate that dared not speak its name: Svengali, anti-Semitism and post-war British heritage cinema,” *Journal of European Popular Culture* 3, no. 2 (October 2012): 155-68. [↑](#endnote-ref-104)
105. Corliss, *Lolita*,46. Interestingly, though, it is Humbert who compares himself to a vampire in the novel: “the purplish spot on her naked neck where a fairytale vampire had feasted”; “a raised purple-pink swelling (the work of some gnat) which I eased of its beautiful transparent poison between my long thumbnails and then sucked till I was gorged on her spicy blood.” [↑](#endnote-ref-105)
106. See for example Judith Halberstam, “Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker’s “Dracula””, *Victorian Studies* 36, no. 3, *Victorian Sexualities* (Spring 1993): 333-52. [↑](#endnote-ref-106)
107. Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2003), 559. [↑](#endnote-ref-107)
108. Ben Macintyre, *The Napoleon of Crime: The Life and Times of Adam Worth, the Real Moriarty* (London: Flamingo, 1998). [↑](#endnote-ref-108)
109. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-109)
110. Ciment, *Kubrick*, 92. [↑](#endnote-ref-110)
111. Appel, *Annotated “Lolita*,*”* 323. [↑](#endnote-ref-111)
112. Ciment, *Kubrick*, 92. [↑](#endnote-ref-112)
113. Abrams, “Logic,” 125. [↑](#endnote-ref-113)
114. Nabokov, *Lolita*, 34. [↑](#endnote-ref-114)
115. Lionel Trilling, “The Last Lover: Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita*,” *Encounter* 11, no. 4 (October 1958); SK [Stanley Kubrick]-Nabokov, “Typed sheet entitled ‘Nabokov,’” n.d., SK/10/8/2, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-115)
116. One is tempted to take the analogy further and that Quilty’s plays, *The Little Nymph*, *The Strange Mushroom*, and *Fatherly Love* uncannily anticipate *Lolita*, *Dr Strangelove*, and *Barry Lyndon*/*The Shining* respectively. [↑](#endnote-ref-116)
117. “Stanley Kubrick: Trivia,” <http://m.imdb.com/name/nm0000040/trivia>. Accessed September 2013. Senior Archivist at the Kubrick Archives, Richard Daniels, has confirmed that, as far as he knows, this is the correct pronunciation. [↑](#endnote-ref-117)
118. Mason, *Before*, 320. [↑](#endnote-ref-118)
119. John Hughes, *The Complete Kubrick* (London: Virgin, 2000), 101. [↑](#endnote-ref-119)
120. Naremore, *On Kubrick*, 112. [↑](#endnote-ref-120)
121. “IMDb Trivia: Stanley Kubrick,” <http://m.imdb.com/name/nm0000040/trivia>. Accessed March 2013. [↑](#endnote-ref-121)
122. Kubrick to Sellers, June 30, 1964; Sellers to Kubrick, July 10, 1964; Kubrick to Sellers, July 16, 1964, SK/11/9/97, SKA. In that last letter, Kubrick, for example, advises Sellers, “Do not, I repeat, do not buy a Pen-F camera. I tried one out and the mirror kick jars the exposures longer than a 1/20th of a second. I do recommend that you take a look at the Pen-B camera, which I have had for over a year and which is a marvelous thing to carry around in your glove compartment or briefcase.” [↑](#endnote-ref-122)
123. Quoted in Gene D. Phillips, *The Encyclopedia of Stanley Kubrick* (New York: Facts on File, 2002), 147. [↑](#endnote-ref-123)
124. Naremore, *On Kubrick*, 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-124)
125. Michael Herr, *On Kubrick* (New York: Grove Atlantic, 2000), 26. The full quote reads: “He was jazz-mad, and went to the clubs, and a Yankees fan, so he went to the ball games too, all of this in New York in the late 40s and early 50s, a smart, spacey, wide-awake kid like that, it’s no wonder he was such a hipster, a 40s-bred, 50s-minted, tough-minded, existential, highly evolved classic hipster. His view and his temperament were much closer to Lenny Bruce’s than to any other director’s, and this was not merely a recurring aspect of his. He had lots of modes and aspects, but Stanley was a hipster all the time.” [↑](#endnote-ref-125)
126. David Parkinson, “Kubrick, Stanley (1928–1999),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/72090. Herr recalls Kubrick’s voice thus: “In spite of the Bronx nasal-caustic, perhaps the shadow of some adenoidal trauma long ago, it was as close to the condition of music as speech can get and still be speech, like a very well-read jazz musician talking, with a pleasing and graceful Groucho-like rushing and ebbing of inflection for emphasis and suggested quotation marks to convey amused disdain, over-enunciating phrases that struck him as fabulously banal, with lots of innuendo, and lots of latent sarcasm, and some not so latent, lively temper, brilliant timing, eloquent silences, and, always, masterful, seamless segues—‘Lemme change the subject for just a minute,’ or ‘What were we into before we got into this?’” Herr, “Kubrick.” [↑](#endnote-ref-126)
127. Dan Bates to Kubrick, August 7, 1966, SK/12/8/1/61, SKA. [↑](#endnote-ref-127)
128. See “*Lolita* (1962),” <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0056193/trivia?tab=gf>. [↑](#endnote-ref-128)
129. Roger Lewis, cited in Humphrey Carpenter, *Spike Milligan: The Biography* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2003), 93. [↑](#endnote-ref-129)
130. Furthermore, in the novel, Quilty has “conspicuously hairy hands,” a “hot hairy fist,” “black hairs on the back of his pudgy hands,” and a “hirsute chest.” Hirsuteness is a stereotypical marker of Jewish masculinity in which the Jew’s body was presumed to be apish and abnormally hairy with “more body hair than a yak.” Margaret D. Stetz, “*Esther Kahn*: Antisemitism and Philosemitism at the Turns of Two Centuries,” in *Antisemitism and philosemitism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: representing Jews, Jewishness, and the modern*, ed. Phyllis Lassner and Lara Trubowitz (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2010), 214. Ironically, in the film it is Humbert not Quilty who is hirsute. [↑](#endnote-ref-130)
131. Alan Spiegel, “The Kubrick Case,” *Salmagundi* no. 36 (Winter 1977): 104. [↑](#endnote-ref-131)
132. Alfred Appel, Jr., *Nabokov’s Dark Cinema* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974),

     245. [↑](#endnote-ref-132)