

## Let's talk about art. Deciphering the symbolic and cultural capital in Woody Allen's screenplays

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Panel 4 – ART & VIOLENCE

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### Abstract

My paper aims to embed the Woody Allen screen persona in a social context and to define how talking about art and the relation to places of cultural matter characterize fictional beings. The Woody Allen screen persona as a fictional character defines itself very strongly through art and talking about art; for that reason the contextualization with the theories of Pierre Bourdieu is very useful, to state the character within a social field and to analyse how the art talk is connected to the narrative concept of the character.

The social theory of Bourdieu examines the relationships between social class, educational participation, cultural competence, cultural practices and lifestyles, and must therefore be understood as a socio-cultural theory of class. As a core component of the theory, the analysis of the relationships between social structure and culture are considered, therefore personal taste is the preferred symptom for Bourdieu to distinguish and characterize social classes. Concomitantly the investigation of the characters conscious/unconscious use of its symbolic/cultural capital goes to show the symbolic violence the Woody Allen screen persona exerts on its (female) companions.

Since the analysed films for the most parts are comedies, talking about art is, often but not always, used to generate humour and is neither of the characters nor the author meant, but satisfies various narrative functions which are to be disclosed as part of the analysis.

I will demonstrate my approach using selected script passages.

**Keywords** – screenwriting analysis, symbolic/cultural capital, social class, New Hollywood

**Stephanie Schwarz** (University of Vienna, Austria) studied Theatre, Film and Media Science in Vienna and concluded her studies with a diploma thesis about Woody Allen as a fictional character. In her doctoral studies (Supervisor: Claus Tieber) at the Faculty for Philosophy and the Humanities at the University of Vienna she focuses on Woody Allen's screenplays and the contextualization with the theories of Pierre Bourdieu (Title: "Let's talk about art- Deciphering the symbolic and cultural capital in Woody Allen's screenplays").

Various Lectures including the UNESCO Theatre Institute Vienna and the annual Film und Fernsehwissenschaftliches Kolloquium (Colloquium especially for young academics with focus on film and media studies) in Zurich, Switzerland. Publications include an article in *Medienwissenschaft* edited by the University of Marburg, Germany and a contribution for the Austrian magazine "gift", journal for the independent theatre scene, where she is also an editorial member.

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