

JAN 9 1980 (For class, track the ink lines & arrows: pencil as just helps.)
To track lecture as delivered, with inserts, follow the link buttons

In The Comic Mind Mast lists, under Hawks and as the essential screwball comedies of the dialogue tradition, 20th Centuryx (to be compared favorably to Fleming's Bombshell and Hecht-scripted Wellman's Nothing Sacred), Bringing Up Baby (where he praises Hawks' mastery of middle shot with sudden feelingful closeups--indeed an auteur model, as when Susan hears David is engaged), and this he compared favorably to What's Up Doc?, then His Girl Friday better than The Front Page and parodying McCarey's The Awful Truth, then War Bride and (less good) Gentlemen Prefer Blondes which he says is leaden like Countess from Hong Kong because "the pace and spirit of the Hawks comic world required the detachment of black-and-white and the picture-framed distance of the smaller screen[than one gets in color and scope] where pictorial scope works against the dialogue film". Then he goes on to Capra, Sturges, and Wilder. That just about exhausts "the dialogue tradition" and the rest belongs to the clowns, in the tradition running from the silents up to the Marx Brothers, Fields, Jerry Lewis and now Woody Allen and Steve Martin: Allen is hardly in "the dialogue tradition," rather in the one-liner tradition. → What it comes to is that when you say "screwball comedy" you mean Hawks, and when you say Hawks you mean Baby (unless like Mast you mean, wrongly, 20th Century). It is the most Shakespearean of films ^{in many ways: the snap of its dialogue, &} (its openness contrasting with 20th Century in that regard, and its generosity revealed in the comparison, 20th Century being about the affectionate revelation that since an exhibitionist's feelings are all for effect anyway it doesn't matter that much that he keeps having those larger than life feelings, but Baby's ^{open & generous, &} being about the discovery that for psychic health, for not being stuck in some kind of artificial constrained "civilized" world (with all its implications of rejection of the John Ford universe, where every role is a trap), it is absolutely essential to (in some regards cruelly) cut away the constraints and let chaos rule: ~~the larger than life feelings are~~ just like 20th Century's, ~~but~~ in that they are to be exhibited immediately and intensely on the surface (see David about to strangle Susan, and that they are unpremeditated and hence real--Susan says whatever comes into her head, she says, and David

insert ①

To say that there are leopards in Connecticut is to open oneself to the possibility that perhaps one doesn't have to deny it - that is, maybe there's another way to get in tune with things than by clamping down on one's work and behaving in the ways you think you have to in order to make it in a difficult world, such ways as begging for money, being willing to be squelched by propriety, accepting the socially imposed notions of the sex roles. If one does accept that there are other alternatives, one can become silly (as we see it silly but good in the major to do his hunting calls & to be 'hung up' on the door; as we see how Susan is silly & laughable - as she knows - doing her tricks & being a smartaleck) but being silly may not hurt (it does get the million dollars better by what happens than by what David tries, his abseguiousness: in a sense we're seeing advice in the Depression to play it cool & loose & you'll win, that is, that power world which still does operate will see you as one of their own not as a flunky - it's more important, for winning, to have a loose style than to turn to the left, e.g.) and it is obvious that not being silly & loose does hurt, it turns you truly ridiculous because you do get uplifted & lose flexibility.

But notice: ^{not denying there are leopards'} ~~being silly~~ doesn't mean just ignoring,

them either: David may be uptight, but the reason Susan finds him "the only man she ever loved" is that he accepts her needs & tries to do something about them - 'looseness' isn't 'detachment' any more than it's 'obsession'; and David's willingness to be concerned for Susan, ^(the lion dress, the leopard "attack") though she manipulates it, & though he thinks he disavows it, keeps him from being just ~~to~~ a kind of heedless playboy (that's too loose) & someone worth marrying. She needs & gets some of his concern, he needs & gets some of her fun: just as without her he's likely to become hidden behind his dinosaur, so without him we see she's kind of pathetic, truly heedless & alone - & moreover, as we will see, she is in as much danger ~~of~~ (from her leopard when it turns up (it may start off tame, but it can double), as he is from his bone when it turns up (it may start off dry & cerebral (Rodin's "Thinker") but it can take you over, you can lose it (or that you do), if you don't know what to do with it (where to put it) your sexual identity & the whole fabric of your life may be in doubt.

Back to "One at first..."

To work this out, then, consider - (back to "one at first")

20
JAN. 9

where is 208 the
oddly is not to keep
going.

had said it about her before--but their point is to blow away the constraints and hence release the characters back for something closer to "normality"

David & Susan

~~Wood may be wrong here:~~ they will get married, and the Aunt and Major Applegate are there precisely to prove that settling down in Connecticut with a lot of money doesn't mean that you can't go on being an eccentric, i.e. you don't have to be in Brazil to be able to have access to the

leopards: as Cavell probably argues, the whole point is that look at it right and there are leopards in Connecticut, whereas ~~the~~ 20th Century, more like the adventure films, is designed simply to make us pleased that

To insert 1

eccentrics can continue to exist on their own terms, people who make of the existential chaos their own alternate reality, like, as I say, the

Everyone can do it right, as against the adventure films where
in a self-constructed

group, in the adventure films, The group continues (though it can loosen up, see Hatari, and even ~~that~~ the woman can be let in [but only at the price of becoming ~~the~~ part of the group] and the chaos, the panic and emptiness, remain out there as the conditions of life against which you forge for yourself, completely on your own, and without the supports of religion or the

then

continually make reality

satirized society or any social purpose except that enormously rich "having fun" ~~That is,~~ seriously, Hawks espouses a self-directed, intuitive, ethics based on the pleasure principle where that is extended to include any kind of

turning it into the philosophy which underlies it at the price of wealthy tons

Alternative: "over"

vigorous involvement in the world, as against scared looking out for oneself. One I find denies that, as Barthelme has done by bailing out just what David does by building the

From insert 1

dinosaur, alienating himself from it so that he doesn't know where to put his bone--alienated from it, he becomes it, as Susan calls him Mr. Bone: he doesn't simply have the phallus, he is the phallus because he's so intent on disavowing it it as if overwhelms him, though becoming domesticated and contemptible in the process, not awesome as one might think, but the kind of thing a little yappy dog can take over, making him ridiculous as he chases around after the dog--you can't put it better than it's put at first: he

Rather he's

thinks the bone goes in the tail (correct, as in "piece of tail," incorrect

This is taken as adventurousness in the serious films, the weight on one's doing it,
i.e., countering the emptiness & chaosiness of life by going out to meet it
without any anxiety, - but in the comedies it's reversed, the equivalent, "the
group" with its directedness must break up, & the "unquon involvement"
doesn't counter the world so much as accept it in here, just "be part
of the chaos: 'one is part of the chaos' in a sense the other way too,
but the weight is one there, here the weight is one the chaos in one.
If you say the opposite of that openness is "watching your ass" you
have it, because the issue is Einbahn, basic trust vs. basic
mistrust, someone will get you from behind - hence Hawks' sense,
despite all of the objections we can make to his timidity
of (as Kaelle says) falling back in order to advance. One
sees it clearly in the adventure films. Back to "over"

When Miss Swallow contemptuously says "you tried it these yesterday and it didn't fit" he just gives up.

in tail*ass, not that ultimately anal intercourse is going to be beyond David and Susan [the hat over the rump proves that], but that for what David has in mind (children, all that kind of thing, i.e. sexuality under its 'normal' aspect) the bone doesn't go in the tail, and one aspect of having accepted constraint is to be so alienated that he doesn't know it doesn't; ~~you can't have it both ways~~ ^{So} if you are trying to be what David is, and say excuse me to open doors you pass through, you are holding in so hard you can't get it straight about sex; ^{consequently,} ~~and~~ if you are going to be open enough to respond to nature's instructions about where you put the bone you are going to have to take your glasses off and revert, to childhood and ^{ultimately} to the standard macho images as in holding off the leopard with a chair--(half the charm is the joke implied in taking the glasses off: what we have here is of course a film about a sexually intuitive partner opening another one up, and that's usually the other way around, e.g. *It Happened One Night*, *Electric Horseman*, *Shop Around the Corner*, in some regards, ^{even in Hawks' *The Girl Friday*} but more clearly romances, *All that Heaven Allows*, *Now Voyager* my wife says ~~it's~~ "it's the kind of lesson people want to teach to Hepburn," Max says: ~~Woman of the Year~~, I say *African Queen* at which point you just have had to accept the dangers of a kind of polymorphous perversity--let go and anything can happen. (hence the winding up in women's clothes, hence the very real dangers of even leopards doubling, there being a bad one too--it isn't that "I've gone gay" means accepting a homosexual life-style, it means that a lot is possible which hadn't been) though there's a kind of trust (it is Hawks' deepest value) that even when it's all hanging out the bone will go where it should, that is, nature in the raw will tell you what to do, you can't trust society but you can trust yourself. It is a "self" which is defined by a certain ^{anti-bourgeois} social attitude--the rich and hence unanxious and the poor and hence vibrant are the free ones, Mrs. Random rightly assumes she can just order the doors open and ^{on the other hand} Susan is herself released when she becomes Swinging Door Susie, because what constraint means

is not only civilization but the anxieties of capitalism, the class structure: the constable and the psychiatrist are representative of what is wrong; the barkeep who just serves the rich and knows ~~his~~ trick with olives and Gogarty (who knows the terrors and the absurdity of the society's saying that they should be controlled when it, the society, is as loony as ^{he} he is: ^{who are right.} There they are ranting and raving and then they say to me keep off the bottle--perhaps the film screeches to a halt the way it does when Barry Fitzgerald comes on exactly because it is that critique, what threatens to undercut the Hawks Mash-like acceptance of an elitism which alone can keep class anxiety at bay, ^{which} is where the real anxiety lies in Hawks and Gogarty works against our speculating that we too could have 26 acres of the Forest of Arden:

we're more likely to hit the bottle than act like Hawks' 20's college students up to their pranks. ^{and we have a suspicion the bottle won't solve the Depression (though sex probably will.)} Point: the image is Kane with Susan Alexander, the rich man being able to be urbane and release the anxious woman because she doesn't have money, the woman's anxiety being the analogy of David's (or any man's) Shop Around the Corner kind of stodginess--Sirk works against this in Imitation of Life by having the woman do work to get free, to the amazement of the man who was going to release her by having her give up all for love--rather than, like Sirk, saying "even being an anthropologist can be vibrant and immediate" (they get a hard time, see On the Town), Hawks says "it doesn't matter who does the releasing, but it has to be done, and so in a sense men and women are equal". We can talk about sexism all we want, but I think our responsiveness to the sheer verve of Jean Arthur and Hepburn and ~~Rose~~ Roselind Russell in Hawks is more intuitively correct than up-tight assessment of woman's liberation--but Angels is a hard case, and we'll think about it tonight.

Basically what I've been saying here is that this film quintessentially gets at the lesson all comedy wants to get at, that as Frye says the world's "opinion" is that things are "fixed and definable," that's what "reality" is, but that public "opinion" is really wrong, what "reality," "gnosis" (as in

gnostic) is, is the opposite--"whatever reality is, it isn't that": as the reference to gnosticism implies this is a dead serious point, (it's related to rationalism and Descartes, I think, to the idea that there are things known to be true quite separate from experience, since experience, being always embedded in a world which has firmed up wrong is bound to be with its Mad Mad World mistake, ~~that~~ or 1941, that (just speed and misleading), which is what comedy all too often misses. Forster in Passage breaking rules and not being vulnerable is what yields wisdom. to India sets the kind of wisdom which knows that "God si love" against the panic and emptiness, and so does Hawks, it's what makes him so loveable: track it out: ~~David~~ everybody quite rightly runs from the bad leopard, (I keep thinking of Freud's and Melanie Klein's notion of the good teat and the bad teat, the ambivalence about satisfaction which derives right from the bottom, the fact that sometimes you don't get the milk and you naturally blame what isn't giving it too you, which is really indistinguishable from what does, which paradox you make sense of by assigning a notion of the bad one and carrying that ambivalence about gratification/pleasure/sex right on up: no wonder women are scary and threatening in Hawks movies, and no wonder we have both Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell in leopard-patterned dresses being predators in Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (see the picture in Wollen p. 89), a brunette and a blonde--in short, it is an illusion that there's a good teat and a bad teat, but a reality that that illusion stands for, the reality that there's a lot of pain associated with sex which it's only natural to assign to the sex and so get cautious about, even though it's exactly that which causes you all the uptightness trouble (as well, of course, as permitting civilization by encouraging you to postpone gratification, ~~see~~ ^{see}

in American Educator)). Since this is a reality, gnosis covers it, and those who run when the bad leopard turns up are quite sensible--even Baby does it, you notice. But that it's sensible to run doesn't mean that you don't have to cope (that's the core of the adventure films--you're going to get wounded but you have to cope), and David now is ready to. In

6 9 1963

→ To Crack This through:

effect, ^{bring} Susan ~~has brought him~~ ^{David} to the point where he's ready to ^{with a} by easy stages, telling him first (in effect) that 'yes ^{you} ~~he~~ can cling to ^{your} ~~his~~ bone and carry it around with ^{you,} ~~him~~, not relinquish it, ~~but~~ nobody's going to castrate you [note how he holds the bone up in the air from Baby, and note that we think of the image of a woman up on a chair holding her skirts from a mouse], and see, I have this leopard and if he seems to be able to hurt somebody (i.e. the telephone scene) it's all really just a gag, exactly a way to make you realize that there isn't any danger, so let's have fun with the leopard, nobody will suffer but the chickens, and you'll see that you can be covered over with their feathers and it isn't so bad, you still have your bone.' ^(what?) So as Susan gets doubled by this leopard (which is, notice, a taming of her sex (because it's a tame leopard, violating the truth of leopards and the existence of the bad teat) as the dinosaur is a taming of his sex), ^x David gets doubled again by George, who isn't big and inert and obsessive / (my what a big one, we say in awe), as we say of the bone) but small and feisty and obsessive through repetition (see how he digs all the holes for the bone and David cavorts after him ^{with the bone up in the air!} -- the aunt looks on, "you call that big game hunting?", for which read, as when one talks about the absurdities of the sex act (see Fellini Casanova, e.g. or Lady Chatterly's serious reflections on the absurdity, "all this fuss"), 'you call that romantic conquest?') -- George takes David's bone away (and he then becomes Mr. Bone, at least his obsessiveness out in the open), Baby escapes, and the very center of the movie, the heart of its metaphor, is that glorious Shakespearean wandering in the forest, Susan looking for her leopard and David looking for his bone (there's the metaphor right there, the sweetness and fun and rightness of this quest, under illusion (as the scene shows, and as the fact that they think they're looking for something outside themselves implies) but wonderfully in tune with reality -- this is the fun of sex, of the openness without the anxiety: it is totally summed up in the most magical of moments, when, like two children in some ideal world coming upon

② But when the turn away from the dinosaur takes place, certain very real problems turn up - in effect, Baby is to Susan as the dinosaur is to David, a taming of her sex as the dinosaur is of his: but the problem for a man is that his sex ^(when exposed) is ridiculous & ineffectual ^(small + yippy) & for a woman that hers is threatening & dangerous - & each character has to work this out - thus there is a further doubling from his sex as each of these problems comes out in turn: from his dinosaur, (to n) on 6.

JAN. 9 1982

their parents in bed, they find George and Baby together, it sure looks
 like they're fighting, and then Susan, the leader, realizes, "they're
playing, David"--we watch it for quite a long while, privileged to observe
 a primal scene with the attitude we all strive to get back to all our lives),
 until (Susan again thinking it's easier than in fact it is: we must somehow
 get in here the idea that she has a lot to learn too, she seems very
 vulnerable and out of control especially at first, you can't just go whole
 hog the other way either, and there's history, not manipulation, to her
 saying as so often there I've spoiled it again) they go across the stream
 which Susan was wrong about, it's too deep, and they have to come back to
 this side while the scene fades from them (i.e. Baby and George disappear):
 it's as if at that point they become children again, with their campfire
 (Red Chief occurs to me), he gets very serious (in that immensely touching
 line, "you told them my name was Bone and you didn't tell me" [though of
 course accepting your phallus, not externalizing it, means that other people
don't see you as silly while you cavort around after the dog digging holes]),
 telling her she's spoiled it all, and at that exact point, ^{(as the new clip appears, the realization that you must} with a complete ^{from} dislocation ^{from} from the film's time-norm and conventions of tight editing, we
 hear off-stage music and Baby doubles--that is, we go to the circus and find
 that the bad leopard has escaped: in terms of theme, once it's been proved
 that you just can't cross that evocative river and reach paradise the fact
 that means you can't (that the leopard isn't in fact tame, there are
 dangers) must be faced, and so it emerges to be faced--so just as David
 was first the dinosaur (our children, said Miss Swallow) and then doubled
 to become George, obsessed now at least by the bone and not the dinosaur
 who was a child, so Susan was first Baby and now doubles again herself, this
 time to the bad leopard she has to face as David had to face George, ~~and~~
 Susan then (in a bare outline), just as David takes his glasses off and
 becomes good-looking, reducing to the quest from his bumbling at first, also

reduces ~~xxxxxxx~~, becoming Swinging Door Susie and with her own wit carrying out a plan--this isn't just doing whatever comes into her head (the kind of thing where she turns the tables on people sweetly, with lines like if you're playing golf why are you in a parking lot) but actually confronting herself too: her swinging softly out that window and disappearing into the night is a magic moment, as she sets off not just ignoring the law but counter to it: there's a feel of a repression, a gap, in just how Susan catches the bad leopard--there are years left out, and in them must come what came for the couple in Under Capricorn, but here not avowed--we know Susan had those resources, she does avow her sex and get the bad leopard in tow, and her coming back with it is a wonderful moment, she isn't just a little spoiled rich girl who can't face up to what she's really doing, who 'pretends her leopard's tame,' somehow she faced it down--but just how she did it we couldn't see, whatever happens off-screen there is the Medusa head, we have to look at it reflected in the film, not straight on. But everybody else knows, and David too faces up to it (he having worried about "poor darling Susan" wonderfully comically); to bring it back around to where I started here, Susan has brought him to this point--she said the leopard was tame, he started trying to cope with his bone, they both got a vision of what it could mean (but both are still wrong, she still thinking 'why worry' and he still clinging to ideals of his dinosaur) but find it can't, and she somehow 'gets down' enough to present him with what really has to be faced, with the 'leopard as capable of being ~~xxxxxxx~~ bad', something *(its basic metaphoric meaning is that he has to face down her sex, when she won't really allow it)* he has to help her with her because now she knows it too and he has to put himself on the line, again like the adventure films; knowing there are dangers one faces them because the facing is fun--in peal psychology, you take the chances of being hurt and humiliated (rejected, incapable, vulnerable, deprived, whatever) because its exactly in taking those chances that the total "fun" of your being lies, in doing something when it is dangerous, when

JAN. 9 1963

you could look sally and lose self esteem and be hurt. (Is there sexism in Susan's now having to return to being protected, can we not allow her to be knowledgeable finally, must he be the one to face the terrors alone? Perhaps--that's the consequence of the gap, what we didn't see: Terry Southern played with this about the ^{U.S.} ~~XXXXXX~~ and Bay of Pigs, saying that we did it but didn't want to face up to it, "you know, like a dame, doing it but not really doing it".) And just as Susan got the bad leopard for David to confront without her really knowing it, so he confronts and cages the bad leopard without really assenting to it: he faints (isn't the imagery that the woman faints from just being confronted with sex?, too much for the sensibilities?), and then when we see them again he's retreated, he's in a wide-angle shot deep behind the dinosaur just having been scared to death and gotten the hell out of there--it isn't good enough just to do it under the pressure of the moment, you have to process it, firm it up, make it last, accept it: she tells him it's okay, the money's safe, so his anxiety is dispelled, he tells her it's okay, he had the most fun in his life, ^{so hers is,} and in effect then the recollection of the process, the time they had, gives them what can counter the glimpse of the real challenge/^{which} the bad leopard gave them: Susan starts to sway, she's pleased, he worries but she's being herself again and climbs up over the dinosaur, just going right on by his defenses and collapsing them, so that he catches her, ~~kisses~~ and with only a little spasm of resistance accepts the defeat which is a victory, accepts the openness he lacked.