

Schiller & Waters: One philosopher and another a director, both are poets.

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(Written for an undergraduate independent study in cinema aesthetics.)

John Waters, whether the critics—including himself—like it or not, is an artist. He expresses his ideas through cinéma, and although many find these ideas shocking and absurd, he nonetheless is being driven by an aesthetic.¹ One way of understanding his work as a writer and director of motion pictures can be discussed by using an authoritative source on artistic criticism and aesthetics, and in this case it is Johan Friedrich von Schiller's essay *Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, which defines two distinct artistic types. Schiller was a poet, playwright, and philosopher whose work was characterized by moral idealism, strong optimism, eloquent poetic diction, and a classic sense of form. His greatly influential 18th-century essay permeated modern thought as the ideas about these diametric types evolved by other literary and philosophical critics throughout the next two centuries.² According to Schiller, the basis of his essay was that artists who were "naïve" were unconscious of "Nature" acting through their expressions, and the ones who are "sentimental" are aware of their separation from "Nature," and their expressions result from this reflection. To clarify this context of Nature, Schiller defines it as "the voluntary presence, the subsistence of things on their own, their existence in accordance with their own immutable laws."³ The two types are rather moral aesthetics than observational ones. The naïve can be best summarized as a representation of an idea:

"We love in them the tacitly creative life, the serene spontaneity of their activity, existence in accordance with their own laws, the inner necessity, the eternal unity with themselves. *They are what we were; they are what we should once again become.* We were nature just as they, and our culture, by means of reason and freedom, should lead us back to nature."⁴

And the sentimental grows from the naïve because the individual is conscious of a separation from nature, in turn seeking the nature that is lost. This is

"The path taken by the modern poet... Nature sets him at one with himself, art divides and cleaves him in two, through the ideal he returns to unity. But because the ideal is an infinitude to which he never attains, the civilized man can never become perfect in *his* own wise, while the natural man can in his."⁵

Julius Elias, a scholar on Schiller's work, sums up the difference between the naïve and sentimental. "The naïve poet individualizes his material by presenting it together with all its limitations, but these are not felt as such; thus the infinitude of which the individual is a part is not fragmented; the sentimental poet idealizes his material by removing all its limitations."⁶

Since John Waters uses the medium of cinéma, the question may arise of whether or not Schiller's essay about poetical types is valid in examining the art of motion pictures. Fortunately, Schiller himself expressed that what is said of his poetical types can be applied, generally, to the fine arts.⁷ This was later affirmed by Coleridge, as he stated "All the fine arts are different species of poetry. The same spirit speaks to the mind through different senses by manifestations of itself, appropriate to each."⁸ Concerning Waters' work, cinéma is his poetic manifestation. And, as to why Schiller chose to write his essay about poetry, he defines it as "giving mankind its most complete possible expression."⁹

Using Schiller's authoritative context on the distinction between naïve and sentimental art, a juxtaposition can be studied using Baltimore filmmaker John Waters' work, using his recent motion picture *Pecker* representing naïve art, while his earlier work *Crybaby* is of sentimental art. This examination of what is 'naïve' and 'sentimental' within Waters' work can be accomplished via the lens of cinéma, accounting for the content of each picture by going over (1) action and plot, (2) language of screenplay, (3) casting decision by acting style, (4) distinct characters within each picture, especially the differences between the artists Pecker and Crybaby, and (5) the setting of each picture.

In considering the differences in action and plot, Schiller may present this question: What is the mode of expression? In other words, what are the forms of story telling to which these pictures conform? In order to discover this, one must trace from Schiller's contribution to aesthetics, which was studied by other critics who had influenced the aesthetic criticisms of today. From his essay, Schiller elaborated his poetic types of *naïve* and *sentimental* into human types of *realistic* and *idealistic*, respectively.¹⁰ And from the human types, early 19th-century critics elevated the *ideal* to greatness by representing what is *Romantic*, and declared a break with the *Classic*, which was thought at the time to be too limited in its *naïve* antiquity. Sychrava further identifies Schiller's diametric aesthetic as it influenced the 20th-century as realist *mimetic* and idealist *expressive*;¹¹ the former discussing what is objectively literal and the latter being what is subjectively figurative each respectively having roots in the notion of naïve and sentimental.

By understanding that the qualities of realistic, Classic, mimetic, and literal are associated with the naïve, and that idealistic, Romantic, expressive, and figurative are with the sentimental, one can now see where they are apparent in the action and plot.

Pecker has a realistic and literal feeling, because the action is presented in a way that feels natural to the audience. The young, photographer Pecker is seen going about his life in an ordinary way. The plot is feasible; a person who starts life as one way, becomes influenced toward another, and decides to return things on his own terms. As odd as a lot of the characters may seem, the picture portrays itself literally. Using Schiller's terminology, *Pecker* is a narrative; a story with its characters moving through a straight-forward presentation.¹²

Crybaby feels artificial throughout the entire picture. It is an obvious theatrical extravaganza, resembling a musical, complete with several songs; the action is expressed with exaggeration. And it is conventional to assume that musicals are non-realistic, since the suspension of disbelief for the audience is broken by song. The audience is a witness to Crybaby's highly subjective, Romantic attitude. The plot is unrealistic; within a matter of a day, the boy gets his girl in the following ways; he gets her attention by driving recklessly along side her grandmother while he and his crew are singing a song. Throughout the picture, there are big, overly dramatic fight scenes. Meanwhile, Crybaby sings at a concert and later in a jail. At one point there is a hokey-pokey line in the streets leading to Allison's house. In fact, the picture is figurative, and as film-critic Englehart comments, "Glossier than most of John Waters' films, *Cry-Baby* is a rock 'n' roll musical that aspires to make fun of the exploitative juvenile-delinquent films and Elvis Presley musicals of the 1950s." And "It isn't until Allison cries into a jar upon hearing of Cry-Baby's incarceration and then drinks her own tears that Waters' wicked humor surfaces and punctures the superficial romance."¹³ Using Schiller's terminology, *Crybaby* is satire; a story portraying the ideal of unlimited possibilities and how its characters live and respond in a world that forces them to struggle with their expectations.¹⁴

Having attained an understanding of the impact of Schiller's diametric on action and plot, examining the language of screenplay is a similar process, since the texture of language is a reflection of the mode of expression. Therefore, the language of *Pecker* is simply narrative while *Crybaby* is satirical. This can be elaborated by looking closer at the screenplays, beyond the texture, into the dialogue; how do the characters express themselves? And can these characters that populate these screenplays also be real people or only products of the author? The characters in *Pecker* speak naturally because they are not aware of being watched by an audience. This "lack of attention" to one's own "emotions and responses" is a naïve quality.¹⁵ This is because of the narrative mode of the picture, since the audience is being let in on the action, the characters are limited to taking their cues from the world around them. Whereas *Crybaby*, being satirical, the characters have the unlimited ability to press beyond their world and break the fourth wall of the silver screen by letting the audience in on the joke; Crybaby expresses his passions self-consciously because he reflects on his plight while the audience is watching.¹⁶

In witnessing *Pecker*, one can see how he behaves almost involuntarily, as if—like the naïve poet—he can't help himself; he "takes his cue from the natural objects around him," as Sychrava says.¹⁷ In addition, it is implied by Schiller that the naïve poet chooses to express about the way things are rather than the way he feels about them. For instance, Pecker speaks naturally and simply, as illustrated at a reception of his photographs into a gallery. "Thank you all for being nice to me and buying my photographs. Thanks Rory for liking my pictures even though they're out of focus... Thanks Grandma for teaching me to believe in myself no matter what people say... My big sister for helping me understand all types of human behavior... My little sister for teaching me that life is nothing if you're not obsessed." This

also clues in to why he accepts people for their natural selves; he doesn't judge them. Meanwhile, Crybaby is judged and will judge others based on his passionate feelings. He cries out "I'm a teenager; I want to live!" His grandmother, Ramona, proudly tells him "you're young, stupid, and mean!" In his relationship with his newfound lover, he expresses "You got it Allison, you got it raw!" At one moment, enthused by passion, he tells her "Kiss me, kiss me hard!" They doing so, a French kiss theme ensues and the audience is taken to cutaways of various couples in their own kissing, each quickly overflowing into unsettling proportions. Later, in jail, Crybaby expresses disappointment by pressing countless license plates with Allison's name. At the end of the picture, when everything including his love is at stake, and he has to play chicken to win, he does it unconventionally on top of the car while his crew drives. He wants his love to be his own, having reflected on what is conventional, he breaks the rules, thereby creating his own rules and a world in which to live them.

One can understand how these characters can be either realistic or products of the author's imagination. Furthermore, there are several moments in *Pecker* that relate directly to this discussion: Pecker's proud mother sighs, "If only you could concentrate on pretty scenery instead of our boring lives." In fact, Schiller identified landscape painters as naïve artists, since they capture nature as it is. Shelly half-heartedly yells at Pecker, "I don't have time for your stupid art." And, "You see Art when there's nothing there." That last statement resonates with an observation by Elias,

"The naïve poet bears his knowledge so lightly that it does not figure consciously in his work—the processes of creation are neither perceived by himself, nor are they apparent in the finished product. The idyllic poet, however, cannot stop at this, but gives us his reflections on the feelings that the naïve poet describes directly."¹⁸

This contrasts with the self-conscious musings of Crybaby, as he confides with us, "One single salty tear is all they'll ever suck out of this Crybaby."

The casting decisions and acting styles differ between the two pictures. First of all, each cast of each picture lives in their own distinct worlds with characters that act in similar ways, one being naturalistic and the other theatrically exaggerated. But one must understand that this distinction between what is natural and exaggerated is a relative distinction; the naïve and sentimental are defined by one's relationship to the other. In order to completely understand how this relationship is defined, one can use a specific example. Compare in relation *Pecker's* Edward Furlong and *Crybaby's* Johnny Depp; one can understand what defines their artistic types.¹⁹ Consider this passage by Schiller, in which he explains the distinct qualities that each artistic type has in relation to the other; the naïve has a natural resource already at hand, while the sentimental strives for a lively, imaginative impulse.

"[If] the naïve poet gains on the one hand in reality at the expense of the sentimental, and brings into actual existence what the latter can only arouse a lively impulse to attain, the latter for his part possesses the great advantage over the first that he can give the impulse a *greater object* than the former has supplied or could supply."²⁰

Furlong plays Pecker as relatively natural. He is low key like an ordinary human being, including voice and bodily expression. And the actor's personality shows through his pictures. Cinéma critic Roger Ebert illustrates this; "Waters follows these characters through their 15 minutes of fame without ever churning up very much interest in them. One problem is that Furlong's performance doesn't project much heat or charisma..."²¹ Although this criticism is a complaint, it does in fact describe the quality that is indicative of what is naïve; Furlong does not churn up a hotly imaginative character because in order to play Pecker he only had to use his natural resource already at hand. This affirms a naïve acting style relative to a sentimental style; relative to Johnny Depp, as he plays Crybaby in a theatrical way; his gestures are exaggerated, especially when he sings. And Depp's personality, known for his lively and imaginative impulses, shows through every moment of Crybaby.

Having looked at the actors who portray Pecker and Crybaby, now the lens should be focused on the characters themselves. How is the former naïve while the latter sentimental? This can be discussed. Starting with the statement that Pecker embraces Nature while Crybaby embraces his otherness—his separation from Nature. Crybaby is self-conscious of himself and those around him in his world. He

thinks highly of himself and will not stop at invoking strength in those whom he loves, as he encourages Allison to ditch the “squares” and join him and his “drapes.” And he will not stop at attacking those whom he knows have potential to change but refuse, which includes most of the world, as it seems to be populated by “squares.” This is reminiscent of Schiller, as he spoke of the idealist; “[T]he sworn enemy of everything petty and jejune and will reconcile himself even with the extravagant and monstrous if it only testifies to a great potentiality ...thinks so highly of mankind that he thereby falls into the danger of despising man.”²² Meanwhile, Nature is acting through Pecker; he is unconscious. Schiller said of inspiration, “It proceeds not by the accepted principles, but by flashes of insight and feeling.”²³ Pecker’s inspiration happens, literally, in a flash. His method is that of genius, which is, paradoxically, the opposite of method.²⁴ Schiller identifies the genius as naïve:

“Every true genius must be naïve, or it is not genius. Only its naïvety makes for its genius... Unacquainted with the rules, those crutches for weakness and taskmasters of awkwardness, led only by nature or by instinct, its guardian angel, it goes calmly and surely through all the snares of false taste... Only to genius is it given to be at home beyond the accustomed and to *extend* nature without *going beyond* her.”²⁵

Further than consciousness, there is reflection. In this case, it is Crybaby who reflects; he rebels against Nature and his surroundings; he taunts the “squares”, citizens of the status quo, and he lives in a trash-ridden junkyard. He refuses to live in their world because he feels he would be a conformist slave to it just as they are. Schiller said that the idealist “will imperil well-being to make freedom his standard.”²⁶ Meanwhile, Pecker roams through his life not bothered of whether he is conforming or being conformed. He does not reflect; he embraces his natural surroundings. Being naïve, “It is enough for him that he is in possession, the earth is his, light dawns in his understanding, and satisfaction in his breast.”²⁷ Pecker’s life is a subjective experience, and he is, like the naïve poet, too close to his subject-matter to reflect on it.²⁸ At the gallery, guests can’t figure out the subject of a specific photo. They ask Pecker to describe what it is, and he tries but is speechless. Then his friend describes exactly what it is, and suddenly it disturbs those who asked the question because they feel separated from the subject-which-is-nature whilst Pecker is not. “It is precisely this mode of expression in which the sign disappears completely in the thing signified...this it is we generally call a gifted style displaying genius.”²⁹

The following exemplifies the differences between Pecker and Crybaby, as Schiller further elaborates on his naïve realist and sentimental idealist:

“The idealist by no means enjoys so happy a fate. It is not enough that he often quarrels with happiness because he fails to make the moment his friend, he quarrels with himself too; he cannot be content either with his knowledge or with his actions. What he demands of himself is boundless; but everything that he achieves is limited. This rigor, which he applies to himself, he does not renounce in his behavior towards others. He is indeed generous because in relations with others he does not remember his own individuality so much; but he is often unfair because he as easily overlooks the individuality of others. The realist, on the other hand, is less generous, but more fair-minded since he judges everything rather *in its limitation*.”³⁰

Pecker is unconscious of his relationships. Pecker adapts with his friends and family. He humors them as they naturally act themselves. Consider his girlfriend, Shelly, and how he likes to see her happy. “Whatever he loves he will seek to make *happy*, where the idealist will seek to *ennoble it*.”³¹ Crybaby is self-conscious of his relationships, and one can see that he does ennoble Allison by putting her on a pedestal. Notice how Pecker enjoys giving happiness to those whom he loves, while Crybaby makes demands from all around him. “...the realist will always manifest his affection by *giving*, the idealist by *receiving*.”³² Pecker’s actions are subtle, while Crybaby will go at great length to express himself. This is because both these characters have contrasting relationships with their world. The former is satisfied with what the world has given him, while the latter’s appetite is always insatiable simply because feels the unlimited possibilities that the world has to offer. Schiller affirms this:

“Upon the sentimental poet she has conferred the power, or rather impressed a lively impulse, to restore out of himself that unity that has been disrupted by abstraction, to complete the humanity within himself, and from a limited condition to pass over into an

infinite one. ...Hence in the latter his mind is in motion, it is in tension, it wavers between conflicting feelings; whereas in the former it is calm, relaxed, at one with itself and completely satisfied.”³³

Crybaby is sensitive to his surroundings; he makes people aware that he is aware, that his mind is in motion, that he has feelings about his feelings. He cries, but self-consciously; he eventually tattoos a tear drop under his eye. He already has a tattoo with his name, “Crybaby”, and his name is on his jacket. His car is black with a fire stripe; he seems to embrace how everyone refers to him as a juvenile delinquent. He watches people as they watch him eat a lit match. And he does not hesitate to boast “I can sing pretty good.”

Where do these actions come from? Why do these characters behave the way they do? What drives Pecker’s subtlety, and Crybaby’s exaltations? The answer is inspiration, as Schiller describes why the naïve realist and sentimental idealist behave the way they do:

“If the realist, even in his moral actions, calmly and uniformly submits to physical necessity, the idealist requires inspiration, he must for the moment exalt his nature, for he can do nothing unless he is enthused. But then, of course, he can do all the more and his behavior will manifest a character of loftiness and grandeur which one looks for in vain in the actions of the realist.”³⁴

Crybaby tries his hardest to control his life, so he reacts against nature. His hair is molded with a specific drape. He breaks down the jail glass that divides him and Allison. He puts on style, yet he is not original because he toggles between a falsetto, high-pitched “doo-wop” when he’s experiencing melancholy, and Elvis when he’s enthused. Pecker doesn’t interfere with nature. He serves someone fries but a roach runs into them, instead of snatching away the fries, he stops to take a picture. He takes pictures of everything—mundane; cheeseburgers on a grill, unusual; woman shaving legs on bus. Shelly is correct in saying “You see art when there’s nothing there.” Yet his peers call him an artist. Rory says, “Your pictures are the real thing.” A critic says “Your pictures are sublime.”³⁵ He responds, “If I knew how to make them any better they probably wouldn’t work at all.” Because of his frankness, he is a sincere character. Yet this leaves him vulnerable to being used by others for their own gain, as Rory the gallery owner did; even though she didn’t mean harm, she interfered in his home and love life because she wanted to possess his artwork and himself. Schiller speaks of this: “... By his own sincerity, lends the other the means with which to harm him, this we find naïve. We laugh at him, yet we cannot refrain from esteeming him. For his trust in the other man springs from the uprightness of his own temperament.”³⁶

The nature of Pecker’s artistry can be clarified by the following: “To be naïve it is necessary that nature be victorious over art (truth over deceit, simplicity over artifice), whether this occur counter to the knowledge or will of the individual or with his full awareness. In the first case this is the naïve of *surprise* and amuses us; in the second, it is the naïve *temperament* and touches us.”³⁷ The best example can be illustrated when Pecker’s grandmother, “Memama,” is confiding to him how her statue—or rather, ventriloquist’s puppet—of Holy Mary was miraculously speaking aloud. It was obvious that he could see that his grandmother was lip-synching, yet his naïve heart graced hers, and he smiled and snapped a photograph. Schiller would agree with this as “We ascribe a naïve temperament to a person if he, in his judgment of things, overlooks their artificial and contrived aspects and heeds only their simple nature.”³⁸ Then this brings up the question of whether or not Pecker is being childish. Yet it is more correct to say that he is childlike. “The childlike character that the genius imposes upon his works he likewise displays in his private life and morals.”³⁹ And he is not dead, dumb, or blind. Elias makes clear that “one cannot be a poet at all, not even a naïve poet, if one is stupid and insensitive.”⁴⁰ Nobody and nothing offends him. “Look at her, she’s scary.” He observes an admirer looking at a photograph of a woman, flipping Pecker off with her middle finger. Pecker responds, “I don’t know, I think she looks proud.” Pecker’s accepting attitude toward everyone—even the woman who gives him the finger. Schiller further describes the naïve type as “*intelligent*, for nature can never be otherwise; but he is not *cunning*, for only art can be so. He is *modest*, even shy, because genius always remains a mystery to itself; but he is not fearful, because he does not know the dangers of the path he travels.”⁴¹ There was also the time when he was shoed away from the Pelt Lounge basement window. “I was just looking!”

“The naïve mode of thought can therefore never be a characteristic of depraved men, rather it can be attributed only to children and to those of a childlike temperament. ... [They] often act and think naïvely in the midst of the artificial circumstances of fashionable society; they forget in their own beautiful humanity that they have to do with a depraved world...”⁴²

In reference to his camera, Pecker says, “Everything always looks good through here.” Everything Pecker says and does is delivered in a most graceful mode, and Schiller would agree that “From the naïve mode of thought there necessarily follows naïve expression in word as well as in gesture, and this is the most important element in gracefulness.”⁴³ Lastly, the naïve and sentimental qualities of these two characters can be best summed up with this observation: Pecker’s name was given to him, while Crybaby named himself.

The last focus is on the world that contains these characters—the setting. Each picture is composed in their own, unique world, one different from the other. *Pecker*, being a naïve picture, is presented as the director, John Waters knows best, his old home of Hamden. *Crybaby* is sentimental because it is presented as a world exaggerated landscapes to invoke ideas. Pecker lives in Hamden, which is a place that Waters is familiar with in reality. Geographically, Crybaby lives across the county line in Baltimore, yet this is a warped, exaggerated version to suit the ideas of the director. The audience can immediately see Hamden as a borough as it naturally is; a place filled with truth that may be just as strange as fiction, but nonetheless, sublime in its presence. Schiller would express his impression of Hamden as himself being “...surprised in the midst of artificial circumstances and situations by the sight of simple nature.”⁴⁴ He would also go on to say that “Anyone who observes [the naïve] ... will find this impression always joyous, always pure, always serene, even in the case of very pathetic objects; with sentimental poetry it will always be somewhat solemn and intense.”⁴⁵ This applies to the true, living presence of Hamden and to the representation of Crybaby’s home being fantastic and imaginative. Hamden opens with the Mount Washington Monument, and the title card “PECKER” is superimposed over the phallic monument, a clue to what’s in store for the audience; seeing things as they are, through naïve eyes, selecting and arranging according to nature. A bus ride follows, showing row homes, a sandwich shop, shopping carts out on the street, a Laundromat, a neighborhood bar, including signs for steamed crabs and pit beef. Crybaby’s Baltimore is divided into sections for each class; the drapes and the squares. The living conditions are exaggerated; Uncle Belvedere, played by Iggy Pop, is bathing in a large pail. There is also the make-out place on a hill, in which the crowds of couples are illuminated by the lightning bolts overhead. There is also the jail with the token cartoon uniforms, complete with black and white stripes and cap. Crybaby and his drapes live in the “Red-neck-Riviera;” The watering hole, complete with the quarry lake, the park grounds with the concert patio displaying the Confederate flag in an act of embracing otherness. Meanwhile, the squares’ territory of suburbia is spotless and bright as a satire of circa 1950’s American dream.

Now that the above has been considered, it is time to reach a conclusion. But first, one must consider Elias’s comment about Schiller’s final thoughts on naïve and sentimental, and what Schiller himself as an artist turned out to be:

“That the types are commixed in practice is as readily conceded as that their complete fusion is impossible except as an ideal for all, and as a rare sport of nature in a few individuals. The scrupulous and searching criticism of his own type brought him finally to terms with his own nature: he is an idealist beyond question, but with a sober leavening of realism.”⁴⁶

This is similar to the plight of John Waters—who, as a director—began as a sentimental artist, and eventually blended with sentimental movies about naïve artists. Perhaps in the future he may settle with utterly naïve films. Or perhaps he may never settle, otherwise he would not be John Waters, and that in itself, is naïve.⁴⁷

Secondly, are his themes making a statement or being shocking?⁴⁸ Or both? Shelley uses photography to make Pecker realize of his recent disconnection from his nature as she cries “I hate modern photography!” He flies to her, knowing that they can make up and be happy again, and he confides to her, “Art’s everywhere! Be spontaneous for once in your life. Let your mind go and you’ll be

free forever.” Then they have sex. In a voting booth.

Perhaps in the final analysis, John Waters is an artist who writes and directs naïve and sentimental motion pictures, is an example of the fleeting human type of which Schiller spoke. “For, in the final analysis, we must nonetheless concede that neither the naïve nor the sentimental character, each considered alone, quite exhausts that ideal of beautiful humanity that can only arise out of the intimate union of both.”⁴⁹

Lastly, take into consideration the last line of *Pecker*, in a moment of sentimental reflection yet maintaining a naïve integrity, “I’m thinking of... (he pauses to frame the audience with his hands,) directing a movie.”

NOTES

1. The question may arise of whether or not John Waters is vulgar in a way that disqualifies him as an artist, based on his shocking methods and whether or not these methods are a reflection of his mind and being. And if so, that is reason to discount him as pathologically afflicted, as if he is at a loss of reason and therefore absent of aesthetic value, therefore nullifying this entire discussion. Schiller asserts this concern as follows:
“Certainly, the poet may imitate bad nature also, and indeed the very notion of satire involves this: but in this case his own beautiful nature must be conveyed with the subject, but the vulgar material must not drag the imitator down with it. In only he himself is true human nature at least in the moment of execution then it does not matter at all what he executes: but equally we can only accept a true picture of actuality from the hands of such a poet. Woe unto us readers, if the grotesque mirrors itself in the grotesque, if the scourge of satire falls into the hands of one whom nature intended should wield a much more serious lash, if men who, devoid of everything that one can call poetic spirit, possess only the apish talent of vulgar imitation and exercise it in a gruesome and frightful manner at the expense of our taste!” [Friedrich von Schiller, *Naive and Sentimental Poetry & On the Sublime; Two Essays*. (New York; Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1966.), 159.]
Fortunately, Waters has been operating by his reason and asserts that he is not subject to grotesque imitation of pathos.
“To me, bad taste is what entertainment is all about. If someone vomits watching one of my films, it’s like getting a standing ovation. But one must remember that there is such a thing as a good bad taste and bad bad taste. It’s easy to disgust someone; I could make a ninety-minute film of people getting their limbs hacked off, but this would only be bad bad taste and not very stylish or original. To understand bad taste one must have very good taste. Good bad taste can be creatively nauseating but must, at the same time, appeal to the especially twisted sense of humor, which is anything but universal.” [John Waters, *Shock Value*. (New York, Thunder’s Mouth Press, 1981), 2.]
In addition, “I only *think* terrible thoughts, I do not live them. Thank God I am *not* my films. If audiences can laugh at my twisted ideas, what’s the great harm?” Ibid, 242. And finally, “I hate message movies and pride myself on the fact that my work has no socially redeeming value. I like to think I make American comedies.” Ibid, 2.
2. “In a changed form, his method continues in the writings of the two Schlegels, in Schelling, and in Solger; it comes to England through the mediation of Coleridge; and it culminates in Hegel, who in turn deeply influenced many 19th-century critics.” [René Wellek, *The later eighteenth century*. Vol. 1 of *A history of modern criticism 1750-1950*. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1955; rpt. 1966), 232-233.]
3. Schiller, 84.
4. Julius A. Elias, ‘Introduction’, Friedrich von Schiller, *Naive and Sentimental Poetry & On the Sublime; Two Essays*. (New York; Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1966.), 35.
5. Schiller, 84-85.
6. Ibid, 112-113.
7. Specifically, Schiller said, “For what has been said here of the poet can, allowing for self-evident qualifications, be extended to apply to the fine arts generally.” Ibid, 114-115.

8. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia literaria*. Ed. J. Shawcross. 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press; London: Geoffrey Cumberledge, 1907; rpt 1949), II, 220-221.
9. Schiller, 111.
10. "...By abstracting from both the naive and the sentimental character what each possesses of the poetic. From [the naive,] nothing remains but a sober spirit of observation and a fixed loyalty to the uniform testimony of the senses, and a resigned submission to the necessity of nature. Of the sentimental character nothing remains but a restless spirit of speculation that presses on to the unconditioned in all its knowledge, and a moral rigorism that insists upon the unconditioned in acts of the will." Ibid, 177.
11. "The comparison goes back to Schiller—though it is a much cruder version than the original—and is again underpinned by the tacit distinction between a realist (mimetic) aesthetic and an idealist (expressive) aesthetic. I also look at the kinds of distinctions between 'literal' and 'figurative' that such criticism implies..." [Juliet Sychrava, *Schiller to Derrida; Idealism in aesthetics*. (Great Britain; Cambridge University Press, 1989), 3.]
12. "Since the naive poet only follows simple nature and feeling... he can have only a single relationship to his subject... [depending on] various degrees of one and the same mode of feeling... The form may be lyric or epic, dramatic or narrative." Schiller, 115.
13. Englehart, website outdated.
14. "The poet is satirical if he takes as his subject alienation from nature and the contradiction between actuality and the ideal." Schiller, 117.
15. "The naive poet, Schiller says, is typified by the lack of attention he pays to describing his own emotions and responses..." Sychrava, 40.
16. "He *reflects* upon the impression that objects make upon him, and only in that reflection is the emotion grounded which he himself experiences and which he excites in us." Schiller, 116.
17. "Schiller may be saying that the naive poet really can't help himself. He writes almost involuntarily, and takes his cue from the nature objects around him. ... he may be saying that the naive poet chooses to write about the way things look rather than the way he feels." Sychrava, 40.
18. Elias, 31.
19. Despite the predominance of the practice of type-casting in the industry of Theatre and cinema, it is important to understand that no particular actor is limited to one style, and in fact, actors are able to stretch themselves into many types. Therefore, it would be good practice in casting to compare actors in relativity.
20. Schiller, 155-156.
21. Ebert, Roger. *Chicago Sun-Times*. <http://www.suntimes.com/ebert/ebert.reviews/1998/09/092501.html>
22. Schiller, 96.
23. Ibid, 96.
24. Elias, 20.
25. Schiller, 96.
26. Ibid, 183.
27. Ibid, 183.
28. Sychrava, 43.
29. Schiller, 98-99.
30. Ibid, 183-184.
31. Ibid, 183.

32. Ibid, 183.
33. Ibid, 154-155.
34. Ibid, 181.
35. There may be an implied joke deferred from that statement. Schiller coined the sublime: "If you march out toward her from your artificial environment she will stand before you in her great calm, in her naive beauty, in her childlike innocence and simplicity—then linger at this image, cultivate this emotion; this is worthy of your sublimest humanity." Ibid, 101.
36. Ibid, 93.
37. Ibid, 89.
38. Ibid, 92.
39. Ibid, 97.
40. Elias, 31.
41. Schiller, 97.
42. Ibid, 93.
43. Ibid, 98.
44. Ibid, 83.
45. Ibid, 116.
46. Elias, 47.
47. Comparing Waters on a historical perspective, the Romantics usually died young, so they didn't have a chance to become mature artists. Elias offers support to this point, "the sentimental mood reflects the ideal in which the art that conceals art returns to nature." (Elias, 40.) Therefore, a human being a dynamic artist may change over the years and later choose the path of naïve temperament.
48. "Schiller points to a question as applicable to the theater of our day as it was of his; whether the dramatist's work reflects a legitimate, if passionately pessimistic, view of human nature; or merely the disarray of his own personality?" Elias, 217.
 "It is this material interest that the vulgar satirist exploits, and since he can hardly fail by this method to arouse our emotion, he believes he has conquered our hearts, and that he is a master of pathos. But any pathos deriving from this source is unworthy of the art of poetry, which may touch us only through ideas and approach our hearts only by the path of reason." Schiller, 118.
 Is this a reflection of Waters? Schiller makes a point about the falsity of the vulgar satirist using his own jaded "conflict between the world and our inclination that embitters" him. That such a method is "unworthy of the art of poetry." So does this make John Waters—known for his method of shock value—unworthy as an artist?
 Not so, according to Waters himself. In his collected writings, (Waters, 2, 94.) he says "I've always tried to please and satisfy an audience that thinks they've seen everything. I try to force them to laugh at their own ability to still be shocked by *something*. This reaction has always been the reason I make movies." And, "All my humor is based on nervous reactions to anxiety-provoking situations." If Waters has enlisted reason to his capacity, and Schiller asserts that art can only touch us by reason, then Waters is an artist in his own right.
49. Schiller, 175.