

**Shrink Rap Radio #166, August 1, 2008, A Jungian View of the Feminine in Film
David Van Nuys, Ph.D., aka “Dr. Dave” interviews John Beebe, MD
(Transcribed from www.ShrinkRapRadio.com by Susan Argyelan)**

Excerpt: *Somehow in the Wizard of Oz, that the pretensions of patriarchy are exposed, it allows the feminine in the form of that little girl to come forward and (inaudible) the good to assert the power of the feminine. And I think the whole drama turns on an intuition that American culture was getting inflated in a masculine direction and going much too much into power and development, and it needed to keep itself balanced and remember feminine values.*

Introduction: That was the voice of my return guest, Dr. John Beebe. John Beebe, MD, is co-author, along with Virginia Apperson, of the new book, [The Presence of the Feminine in Film](#). You may recall that Dr. Beebe was my guest on [show #140](#), which dealt with Jungian typology. Dr. Beebe is a Jungian analyst in practice in San Francisco. He received degrees from Harvard College and the University of Chicago Medical School, and he’s past President of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, where he’s currently on the teaching faculty as well as Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California Medical School, San Francisco. He’s a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. An avid film buff, Dr. Beebe frequently draws upon American movies to illustrate how the various types of consciousness and unconsciousness interact to produce images of self and shadow in the stories of our lives that Jung called “individuation.” Dr. Beebe is particularly well known for his elaboration of C.G. Jung’s theory of psychological types. Now, here’s the interview.

Dr. Dave: Dr. John Beebe, welcome back to Shrink Rap Radio.

John Beebe: Hello. Thank you for having me.

Dr. Dave: Yes, well, I’m really pleased to have you. You’ve recently brought out a new book that you co-authored with Virginia Apperson, titled *The Presence of the Feminine in Film*.

Beebe: Yes.

Dr. Dave: And so that’s going to be the focus of our discussion today. And let’s start out by letting me ask you, what do you and your co-author mean by “the feminine”?

Beebe: Well, the honest answer is that if we could tell you, we wouldn’t have needed to write a book of over 250 pages and still wonder if we’ve begun to define the territory. So let’s be honest. The feminine might be defined negatively as “that which cannot be defined,” since definition – at least in the school of thought Virginia and I were trained in, Jungian analytical psychology – is, definition is precisely a masculine concept.

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Beebe: Putting a very strong definition around things is masculine. That masculinity these days is not confined to biological men, but we all try to nail things down, and it's precisely what *can't* be nailed down that we ought to be thinking about in some other way, and that other way, Jung had the wit to call the feminine.

Dr. Dave: Okay. I sort of knew that I was probably going to be stepping into a morass with that question.

Beebe: (laughs)

Dr. Dave: And it's...

Beebe: "Morass" is a good word, because one of the opening chapters where Virginia particularly does the best possible job of showing us, in all the manifest forms that she can, the essential and elusive nature of the feminine. The film she chose is [Wide Sargasso Sea](#) and in that film, based on the [novel](#) by Jean Rhys, the great, strange English novelist of the dilemmas of women and of the feminine in the twentieth century. looked back to tell the story of the madwoman in the attic of Jane Eyre before she became the madwoman. And in this story, she grew up in the region of the wide [Sargasso Sea](#), somewhere en route to the Caribbean from the Atlantic Ocean, which is just an endless morass in which the most comfortable and fertile creatures are the eels, so that begins to give you an idea of a metaphor for the feminine – just a very large, undefined, rather wriggly thing. And of course, Rochester, who courts and marries Antoinette, is an Englishman who is at first fascinated and then absolutely terrified by that feminine world that his wife is introducing him to. And he proceeds to brutalize her until she descends into it in a negative form, the form of madness. And that's often what happened to the feminine under very strong masculine and strong colonial colonizing, patriarchal initiatives, that the feminine turned into alcoholism and insanity and decadence and degeneration. And that's the form in which we've known it, and it's been seen as something we need to rise above to build our wonderful civilization. Well, we're certainly changing our view about that, aren't we?

Dr. Dave: Yeah, you know what? It just struck me, an interesting conjunction here that was quite unconscious on my part, but I did an interview yesterday for this series with a fellow who's written a book called Irritable Male Syndrome.

Beebe: (laughs)

Dr. Dave: And so (laughs)...

Beebe: I've had it most of my life, although writing this book was sort of a breakthrough because I never was more irritable, and I never have been less irritable since I finished it. So probably I did myself a favor.

Dr. Dave: Interesting. Now, I did read in that chapter, that initial chapter, there was a kind of circling around the concept that reminded me of Jung's part of [Man and His Symbols](#) where he takes his kind of very circular approach to the topic that he's talking about, kind of circling around it and developing a sense of it. Let me ask you...

Beebe: Jung has a lovely phrase for that, by the way, that comes up often in the Jungian literature. The word is "circumambulation."

Dr. Dave: Yes, right.

Beebe: Jung loved to speak in sort of medieval church Latin, so it would come out as "circumambulatio"...

Dr. Dave: Oh, my goodness.

Beebe: We'd change that by adding an "n" and then pronouncing it "circumambulation." But it's to walk around something...

Dr. Dave: Right.

Beebe: And rather than interpret and try to nail it and define it, you sort of just walk around it and look at it from one angle after another. And that's a very pleasing way to creep up on the feminine; that's sort of an eely way of going around it, you know?

Dr. Dave: Yeah, I think as I get older, I'm beginning to get a bit more comfortable with that. I think my nature is more to try to nail things down a bit. So you'll pardon my, (laughs) my questions if they drift in that direction.

Beebe: The main thing to know is the terms "masculine" and "feminine" are very loose, approximate concepts, and in a way, they should be used sparingly. What we chose to do in this long – you might say it's a series of interlocking essays written at different times that end up being sort of one long meditation on what the feminine might be. But using the medium of film, we have a chance to say how different filmmakers, men and women, have imagined it to be and have shown it to be, so that we use the films as a way of walking around the topic...

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Beebe: ...to say, well, it looks like this to him and that to her...

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Beebe: And this to this screenwriter, and that to that director, and this to that actress and that to this actor... And gradually, you get a sense, well, if this many people have approached something similar in these ways and there are these regular patterns, perhaps we can speak of a something that we can call the feminine, because that's how it seems to be symbolized.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Well, let me ask you this: When you talk about the feminine, is that synonymous with the [anima](#), or do you intend something broader?

Beebe: I think it's broader. For one thing, the original image of the feminine probably, in most cultures, is the mother. And Jung does make a difference between the anima, which appears as an archetype for both men and women, surprisingly enough, often in relation to the world of the father, so that we are dealing here with a different, perhaps developmentally later development. We know in history, the anima comes into history pretty much as an idea out of Islamic culture, around the 12th century, if one believes Denise De Rougemont's (ph) wonderful book, *Love in the Western World*. For all intentional purposes, the anima – the idea of the anima as we use it today – was an invention of Islamic poets and philosophers who were steeped in Platonic thought but had that peculiar Islamic twist to it. And they were often – maybe even largely – homosexual in their actual sexual expression. But out of this came up this idea of something about women as something to be idealized, and it sort of made its way into Europe in the 12th century in the famous [courts of love](#) and the notion of courtly love that pervades the Arthurian stories, where you have a Lancelot smitten by Arthur's wife, Gwinevere. Well, she is... Arthur is very much a patriarch; Gwinevere, his wife, is the patriarchal anima; and then Lancelot is the young, ardent lover who falls in love with, and has this terrible conflict because Arthur is his best friend. He's his knight, and yet he's in love with Gwinevere. And that's so beautifully realized in John Boorman's film, [Excalibur](#). Now, all of that is the culture of the anima, and I don't think that is the same as the mother. But then we have a whole other set of stories about the mother and the meaning of the mother. And so at the very least, you've got two terms, the mother and the anima. Then you begin to add in things like the witch – there's a witch, also, in the Arthurian stories. And we add quite a few in our book. A new one that people are now paying more attention to is the female trickster. A woman named Ricki Tannen has written a beautiful book called [The Female Trickster](#). We're looking at that, because we've always thought of the trickster as sort of a male archetype.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Beebe: And I've added in my own work a particular archetype that I'm rather strong on that I call the "opposing personality", and figures like that strange and wonderful character, [Marnie](#), played by Tippi Hedren in the movie that came out just at the time of [The Feminine Mystique](#) and the time, the beginning of the new feminist

movement. Marnie is a marvelous picture of the woman in opposition to patriarchy. She cannot stand to be touched sexually by a man, and when she takes jobs for employers in these dreadful late-50s, early-60s office-work jobs, she takes the job in order to steal from the employer; in other words, to take the energy out of the patriarchy. And the movie begins, the first lines of the movie are the boss, looking at the camera, saying, “Robbed! Robbed by that girl!” and so forth, and then... he’s talking about Marnie. Marnie is shown to us as a woman with a defiant gaze. I call that the opposing personality, and I don’t think it’s the anima or the mother; it’s a new archetype that carries something else. So that... can you see all of these are manifestations of the feminine – not just mother, not just anima, not just trickster, not just witch, not just opposing personality, but in a sense they’re all feminine and not somehow reduced to creations of men or of patriarchy, although they may well be reactions to that.

Dr. Dave: Okay, well, I thank you for that very fascinating overview, and clearly, I have to go back and see some of these films again.

Beebe: (laughs)

Dr. Dave: It’s been a long time since I’ve seen Marnie...

Beebe: Yes.

Dr. Dave: ...and you’re definitely giving me a whole different lens from which to view it. How did you personally come to be interested in the feminine?

Beebe: Well, you know, it came up in my own analysis. One of the wonderful things about Jungian psychology is that it is not a head trip, or at least it should not be allowed to become one. You can sit around and speculate about the deep forms of Western civilization, but it’s not a bit speculative or intellectual if you have depressions or anxieties or symptoms and you go into an analysis. I suppose my first intuition of the feminine was queasiness I would get in the pit of my stomach, which didn’t seem to have anything to do with following the masculine program of my education. It was something else that just wanted attention that I could hardly put into words. Eventually, I began to have some dreams that showed that there was a feminine figure, and she wasn’t a happy camper. The one that I always tell now is when I had several years into my analysis where I came into, I came upon a woman or I was watching a woman sitting in a room all by herself. She was a Chinese woman, and she was wearing no makeup. She looked very plain and very unhappy...

Dr. Dave: Hmm...

Beebe: ...and she, there was nothing in the room. There was no furniture; she was just sitting alone by herself. She didn’t have anything, and the reason she didn’t have anything was that she had a husband who was out, spending his money on drugs

and drink and things in the world. And so he wasn't bringing money home; and there wasn't really any money to buy furniture or for her to have anything; and she was sitting there, depressed and rather, you might say, abject. And of course that was in analysis with a woman Jungian analyst, and boy, would she not let that go! I mean, there was the feminine, and it was being neglected by the masculine!

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Beebe: And of course I wasn't – let me reassure your people, even though it was a heavy drug period in California, I was *not* one of those who was using drugs or drinking. But I was spending my, not my money, but my psychological energy – what a Jungian would call my libido, in the broadest sense of just energy – in the world on extraverted masculine pursuits; and the amassing of books, to have more knowledge; and going out and buying them; and picking up on the latest cultural thing – that's where I got my knowledge of movies. But there was a way in which I was not going inside. I was neglecting my, what was happening inside; and that's why the woman *inside* the room, in a sense, had no furniture. I wasn't giving enough attention to the inner. And in...

Dr. Dave: Yeah, what a powerful image of that!

Beebe: Yeah, a woman of another race, another social class...but I knew she was something I had to take care of. When I came to that dream, I felt like I really had been neglecting a part of me. I thought *I* was the husband, in other words, or at least a part of me was the husband. And I needed to do something about that. And that – what I chose to do, and how I chose to do it – is another chapter. But a lot of it had to do with paying attention to what was going on in the inside of myself, including my own body, inside of my own body. It's amazing how you cannot think about what you're experiencing at a somatic/physical level, and then moment to moment. And if you don't do that, you're just on task and on point and stoking yourself up with whatever it is you use. A lot of very patriarchal menus – coffee, cigarettes, alcohol – to keep it running, so they can keep on task, and they're not listening to that body within.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Beebe: Well, my body was getting headaches or was getting that tightness or that funny feeling in the stomach. And I just learned that I was going to have to take time to just listen to that and let it tell its story. And I began to pay attention to my body as I did psychotherapy. Those days, I was this classic Jungian who would listen to his patients, and every time they had a new dream and I could think of all the different possible what Jungians call “amplifications” of the imagery, the comparative symbolism that I'd learned from Jung. And I could think if this means that and this means that, I'd be so excited, I would just listen with bated breath, and then, when the patient is finished, go on these explorations of the imagery. But what I wasn't doing was sitting back and seeing how it sat with me on the inside. What was my

body doing? What was I feeling? What about that funny headache I was starting to get?

Dr. Dave: Hmm...

Beebe: And then, what I learned is that all that was happening, too. And it wasn't anything about knowledge or being brilliant or understanding. It was more like experiencing those things that happen to you if you listen to that. Well, all I know is that after I began to do that, I began to slow down and allow myself time to breathe... and not just think, but also just go in and just sort of get myself comfortable in the body and then pay attention to that. And then let whatever I said to the patient sort of come from that. And I could start to say things, "Well, that makes me kind of uneasy. I don't know just why, but something about this dream makes me uneasy." And then the patient would say something new that I hadn't expected them to say, and then the tension would go away. Well, I did this for a while and then I had another dream: I met the same woman, and she was happier now.

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Beebe: Her husband took her out for ice cream.

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Beebe: But once I had that experience – you know, (inaudible) you have an experience like that, something like the feminine means a lot more to you. Well, my God, yes! That is different, isn't it?

Dr. Dave: That's great, that's great. Thanks for sharing that very personal glimpse there. Now, how did you get into film as a way of understanding archetypes generally and the feminine, more specifically?

Beebe: Well, it takes me back all the way to the beginning, because my mother adored film. And she actually was a film critic for a brief period when I was an infant, and she would go to various local cinemas. And she could actually get in free because she wrote reviews for the paper. Unfortunately, she didn't have the fortitude to end up [Pauline Kael](#) because she was an honest critic, and at one point she wrote a negative review for the paper. When she went to get her pass to the local theater after the negative review had appeared, they denied her admission to the theater. So that was, she was so shocked and hurt and even embarrassed that she really, she actually got sick. She came down with pneumonia and after that, she didn't do any film criticism again. But she did take me to the movies all through my childhood. She was later divorced from my father; I was an only child. So we would go to the movies even in my childhood at the very least, twice a week. We were living in Princeton, New Jersey, and in Princeton, New Jersey, there were two theaters. If I recall correctly, they were the Playhouse and the Rialto. The Playhouse always

played, back in the 50s, the big blockbuster movies of the time, like [The High and the Mighty](#), with John Wayne; [An American in Paris](#), and all that stuff, whereas the Rialto would play the foreign films, like Alec Guinness in [The Lavender Hill Mob](#) and French movies...like I still remember [Les Jeux Sont Faits](#) with [Micheline Presle](#). And the movies changed at different rates, so I can remember one night, my mother and I going to the Playhouse at 7:30 and then running across Princeton to catch the show at the Rialto at 9:30. And that's pretty remarkable when you're 11 years old, you know? To have that kind of cultural (laughs) emphasis.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, you...

Beebe: So I kept up the habit.

Dr. Dave: Well, you know, you've just sent me on a personal journey as you were speaking. I realized, I mean I know that I've been kind of addicted to film, but I hadn't really made the connection. But actually, I think I had a similar mother, in a certain way. She took me to the art film house early on. And I think at that time, often I didn't understand the films or I found them a little bit boring, even, some of the time...or a little unsettling. But somehow it did get me into that mode of being okay with subtitles and with foreign films, so that later in college, somehow, I felt like I had discovered it (laughs) myself! And interestingly, we have an art film theater here in Santa Rosa, and it's called the Rialto.

Beebe: Oh, my goodness. Oh, my goodness. On the other side of the country? Well, film-going is a real habit, so I got the canon (?) – a great deal of what we call nowadays the canon – into me at a very, very early age, so that when really interesting film criticism started coming out, I was a medical student. And in those days, I was at the University of Chicago. Medical school can be an all-consuming thing, but fortunately that medical school was right on campus, and I could take a break at lunch and go to the university bookstore. And there would be all these wonderful magazines, and one day, I picked up a magazine called Film Culture. And there was a complete, long essay, which has since become one of the most famous books in film criticism, [Andrew Sarris'](#) The American Cinema. But in those days, it was called something like Notes on the Auteur Theory, The American Cinema. And so this was the beginning of talking about film as the expression of the director's personal odyssey. And there were all these films I'd seen with my mother being discussed and listed and ranked, and discussed in terms of the expression and of different directors' points of view and style. And I just drank it in. When I got into Jungian analysis just a few years later, after a few years of... It really became very obvious that the filmmakers that were called the auteur filmmakers were using the medium of film in exactly the same way I was using my analysis: to understand and extend their own personalities and make them evident to themselves. And so when I got around to wanting to teach what Jungian analysis is, it seemed, well, I can't take people into my own analysis. Even if I wanted to tell everything that happened, it wouldn't be the same as actually experiencing it. But I could give them the simulated experience by showing them a movie, and then

they could discuss the movie so that they could see what it's like to experience emotion and imagery and inner transformation in a shared experience that would maybe convey a little bit of what happens in analysis. And in this way, I began to see that film and analysis are different modes of self-realization.

Dr. Dave: Yes, yes. As a matter of fact, later on I was going to ask you about that and make the comment that your use of film in training other Jungian analysts sounds like you're having too much fun. (laughs) I was going to ask you to justify that. But I won't do that. What you were saying about the auteur approach kind of feeds into a different question that I was going to ask you about, which I think will help set you off in an interesting direction. Jungians are well known for their interest in analyzing both fairy tales and dreams. Do you see the film as more like the fairy tale, or more like the dream?

Beebe: The film is both like fairy tale and dream, and it's like something else that Jung gave us a name for that I don't have easily another name for. The name he gave it is "active imagination."

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Beebe: Because what a filmmaker does, unlike a... A dream throws up an image or a strange scenario, and a fairy tale tells a story. And of course, the story may have these famous archetypal elements. But a dream...but a film doesn't just throw up a set of images, nor does it simply tell a story. Now, many people will look at the film just to contemplate the images nowadays. And most people look at a film to follow the story. In fact, the narrative film – Hollywood narrative film – is so successful because it pulls you into its story – that's all true. But something else happens that makes it film and brings it closer to what Jung called active imagination, which is that someone is actually contemplating the story and the images as they go along. And that's not just the person watching the movie in the audience; that's where the auteur comes in. The camera has a very definite point of view, and the camera positions itself in a certain way toward the character and also toward the story. And then very often, the auteur filmmaker will introduce a character who stands for the person watching or contemplating the character. A very good example of that comes early in the film of [Notorious](#), with Ingrid Bergman and Cary Grant. Anyone who wants to rent that film, 1946 film, can see what I'm talking about. The film begins with the end of a trial, and we see the beautiful Ingrid Bergman walking out of the courtroom. And she is surrounded by reporters who are taking pictures of her, trying to ask her questions, and she doesn't say anything. She simply half-smiles at them and walks away. And next we know we're at her house and she's dressed in very loud clothes, and she's having a party to sort of celebrate the trial, kind of a bad idea. And she's somewhat drunk, and we're watching her. And we find ourselves watching her very critically because she doesn't look good: Her hair is ruffled and her clothes are loud and tasteless. She doesn't look like the Ingrid Bergman we know, and we're starting to have these critical feelings. Suddenly we notice the silhouette of a man's head, roughly positioned as if he were the head in

the audience just ahead of us. And he's watching her. And then gradually, gradually, the camera turns and we see the face of the man watching her. And it's Cary Grant. And then Cary Grant begins to interrogate Ingrid Bergman and to make critical and somewhat sarcastic remarks about her, but also check her out to see if he can recruit her for a spy mission to look into the Nazis her father was associated with because he has determined that she actually was not on her father's side. He being the man who was tried in that scene we saw first. So suddenly, our critical watching of this woman becomes a character who then begins to interact with her. Now, that's something very different from either a film or a fairy tale. It's a sensibility engaging with the material. And that's the secret of the auteur theory, and it's also the secret of how film works. Film works by having the consciousness of someone interact with the unconscious presentations of the characters so that something very odd happens – a kind of dialogue takes place between conscious and unconscious. And that's what Jung means by active imagination as opposed to passive imagination. Now, to be fair, half the films that are released are simply passive imagination, of wishful fantasies – what it might be like to go on a date, or get married, or have an adventure. And there's no dialogue; there's just a standard presentation of a scenario. So it might just be an updated fairy tale or a dream. But when you introduce that element of a consciousness, dialoguing and the meaning of the story keeps changing as the consciousness engages with it, then I think you have active imagination and you have this auteur cinema, and you have this cinema being used as a kind of psychological exploration.

Dr. Dave: You know, I was intrigued by your observation that film has grown up concurrently with psychoanalysis, nurtured on a common zeitgeist and sharing a drive to explore and realize the psyche. And I hadn't thought of that before, that they kind of, they overlap.

Beebe: Right

Dr. Dave: They grew up together, as you say.

Beebe: I think Freud's basic first papers on hysteria and the [Lumière brothers'](#) first demonstration in Paris of cinema and the theater, virtually the same. Virtually the same.

Dr. Dave: And you note Lumière. The word "lumière" suggests light.

Beebe: Light. It's amazing. It's amazing how synchronistic names are. You know, the idea of synchronicity is pretty famous now, the meaningful coincidence...

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Beebe: I've always thought the great teacher on dreams is [Dr. William Dement](#).

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Yeah, right!

Beebe: And it's just an amazing, wonderful... And Lumière brothers, yeah.

Dr. Dave: My dentist was named Dr. Bridges, and so on. It goes on and on.

Beebe: Yes.

Dr. Dave: Now, from my reading in your book, I've gained the impression that you look at the characters in the film as reflective of the archetypes in the director's personality.

Beebe: Yes.

Dr. Dave: So, tell us a bit about that.

Beebe: Well, I think that Marnie is a character of Alfred Hitchcock, you know, who's so oppositional. I'm convinced that Hitchcock somehow used Marnie to interrogate his own opposing personality. And it's quite a wonderful scene where Marnie is going into a hotel room to change identities, having just pulled off one of her office robberies. And as she goes down the hotel corridor, suddenly Hitchcock comes out of another hotel room, and he looks at her and he looks back at us, looking at him looking at her with a flatly nervous look on his face. It's an absolutely wonderful comedic double-take but also a clear expression of saying, "Look, she has something to do with me, and you are seeing something about me when you see me looking at her."

Dr. Dave: Hmm...

Beebe: And I think that pretty much says how the director is implicated in the archetype he's exploring in his film. Now, he uses – Hitchcock uses – Sean Connery as a stand-in for himself throughout the rest of the film, and Sean Connery goes about trying to connect with Marnie. Now, there's a lot of gossip around this film that Hitchcock himself was obsessed with Tippi Hedren, and very uncharacteristically, according to everyone who's ever worked with him. It's the only case that we know where he seems to have sexually harassed his star. And Tippi Hedren has told this story to a number of people. It's hard to know exactly what was going on. Was Hitchcock deliberately provoking her to get the performance he wanted? Or, did he get somewhere caught by his material? But either way, maybe both are true. He was definitely implicated in some way in the exploration of this part of himself. You know, I think most people never see – I mean, most of us never see – what I call the opposing personality, which is the side of us which is passive-aggressive, paranoid, or avoidant, or seductive. And we all imagine ourselves to be cooperative people who are trying to do our best and feel that life isn't very fair to us sometimes, but we don't see the ways in which we resist, oppose and defy other people very often, unless we go into a rather foregoing analysis. And my experience is, most people in analysis never get to see that side of themselves well

enough. But there, Hitchcock has shown a side of himself that's very different. And I think Tippi Hedren illustrated that to him and probably fascinated him as he was trying to get closer to that thing that was not like the Alfred Hitchcock we know. It's some other part of him.

Dr. Dave: Interesting. Let's – I know that you've written quite a bit about *The Wizard of Oz*, and that's a film that I'm sure everybody has seen. So, let's talk about *The Wizard of Oz* in terms of the archetypes that appear there. And of course, the question that comes to my mind is, are these archetypes expressive of the author, [Frank Baum](#), or of the director? And I don't remember who the director is of that film.

Beebe: Well, you don't remember who the director is because we don't know who the director is.

Dr. Dave: Oh! (laughs)

Beebe: And there we begin to get the minutes of the auteur theory that everybody who has encountered it... If we do everything archetypal in terms of – even my own language that you quoted – archetypes *in* someone, we start seeing John Beebe's anima, or Alfred Hitchcock's opposing personality – we completely miss the fact that “in” and “out” are very relative terms, and that's not always the way psyche always expresses itself. We have a sort of myth of the individual that's maybe taken us a little too far afield of the fact that we're all interacting with each other all the time, and we live in a culture. So, in a sense, a great movie can be the manifestation of an entire culture. So, I would almost say American culture dreamed *The Wizard of Oz* to life through the magnificent medium of the MGM Studios.

Dr. Dave: Hmm.

Beebe: There is the auteur [Mervyn LeRoy](#), who was this great producer. [George Cukor](#) worked on the film for a while, but he wasn't on the film for very long. [Victor Fleming](#), who also signed *Gone With the Wind*, but Cukor had also worked on that before he called Clark Gable “darling” and was fired from the film... (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Beebe: That's the gossip, anyway, but the point is, Cukor didn't finish *Gone With the Wind*, nor did he finish *The Wizard of Oz*, and Victor Fleming signed both of them. But is it E. “Yip” Harburg who wrote the wonderful lyrics to the songs, from “Over the Rainbow” to “We're Off to See the Wizard” to “If I Only Had a Brain” – all those wonderful songs. In other words, who's the auteur? It's kind of a miracle that the movie is dreamed into being, and one really feels that the ultimate auteur is sort of American culture, and that that movie beautifully distills themes in the American psyche. And that's why it becomes the great American film that we all

know, you know? It's just an amazing... Baum wanted an American fairy tale, and he wrote his book and then the Oz books that followed, and that series was then continued on. I read it non-stop when I was a child because I had a whole set of about 30 of the Oz books, and I read them over and over again, loved them.

Dr. Dave: Wow. Yeah.

Beebe: But the film is something else. The film really achieves the American fairy tale because it really is some kind of wonderful hero's journey in which the hero figure is a little girl. I mean... And then as played by Judy Garland, she's such a real, vibrant, alive little girl. So, you get something... So, it is a hero archetype but it's also very close to being an actual young woman, and that's what's so exciting about it. Because this young woman, in the course of growing up – which is really the problem she has in the book – encounters all the riches of the archetypal psyche, all these wonderful characters. And you get the sense of the journey to Oz as a real hero's journey that takes her really beyond the hero to something more like a sense of the wholeness and range of personal experience, which is a very wonderful thing and a very remarkable thing to come up out of a Hollywood movie, because you have really a larger view of life when you end.

Dr. Dave: What does this say about the American psyche? Presumably, these are archetypal parts of this larger American psyche. Like one idea that just comes to mind right now is, is this movie somehow foreshadowing something about the patriarchy? You know, when Oz is kind of exposed as a humbug at the end?

Beebe: Well, he's certainly very much that kind of, he's sort of a mixture of [McKinley](#) and [Bryan](#). It's hard to know the politics of L. Frank Baum. His mother-in-law – he was married to a woman named Maud Gage Baum – and [her mother](#) – I can't remember the mother's first name, but the mother – her last name was Gage – was a leading feminist in the nineteenth century. And in 1896, there were torchlight parades for William Jennings Bryan, and Frank Baum marched in them. And Bryan in those days was – of course, his most famous speech was the Cross of Gold speech: “You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.” And the “cross of gold” had to do with the idea of the gold standard. And people in that period, there were these arguments in favor of something called ["bimetallism"](#), that there should be a standard for both gold and silver, and not just a gold standard to base currency. Now, none of this seems very important to us anymore. We eventually, as I recall, went off the gold standard, and nothing much happened one way or the other back sometime in the 70s. But 100 years before, people were debating this fiercely. What we now know is that these are really archetypal ideas they were debating. Silver is the classic image of the feminine. And in the original novel, *The Wizard of Oz*, it wasn't ruby slippers; it was *silver* slippers that got Dorothy back home. And there is a kind of loose political imagery that's all tied up in the film. A man named Littlefield explored this. I'm not sure just where this, how conscious Baum was of this, but I take the position that he was playing with some allegorical ideas. The Wicked Witch of the West, who's put out with water, is presumably drought,

and the Wicked Witch of the East has something to do with unemployment. And these were big issues. So what I think is that The Wizard of Oz is sort of like a 19th century politician, sort of manipulating his way, and so there's a bit of Bryan in him; there's a bit of McKinley. But behind all this is the idea that maybe there's a yellow brick road that would be gold, but there's also the silver shoes, which the movie turns into something that audiences can feel better as the feminine, the ruby slippers. And so the key here is, is everything going to be masculine, or is the feminine going to have a play? And somehow in The Wizard of Oz, that the pretensions of patriarchy are exposed, it allows the feminine in the form of that little girl to come forward and then (inaudible) the good to assert the power of the feminine. And I think the whole drama turns on an intuition that American culture was getting inflated in a masculine direction and going much too much into power and development, and it needed to keep itself balanced and remember feminine values. Now, that came up strongly as we were about to enter our maturity as a world power on the eve of World War II, which is when the movie appears. But the issues were already present for Baum at the end of the 19th century, and frankly, they're present for us today. I mean, we're still struggling with how to not just develop ourselves and be powerful and prestigious, but also to take heed of people and our impact on people. And the irony is we're rapidly losing our power to the degree that we neglected those issues.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Beebe: But that's really where the politics of masculine and feminine... and then gold, the sun – the masculine – and silver, the moon – the feminine – come into play, and we're dealing with that today and we were dealing with it in our politics at the end of the 19th century.

Dr. Dave: Interesting. I've already admitted that I'm an inveterate moviegoer. Dare I admit that after our mother's funeral, my sister and I rushed out to the movies? You say –

Beebe: That's a wonderfully healing ritual. And the best kept secret of movies is healing. So many movies are about healing. And most of us just *going* to the movies feel better after. I can understand how the best wake you could possibly have chosen for your mother – and to deal with your own feelings – was a movie. And it makes perfect sense to me; it's not a desecration.

Dr. Dave: Great. (laughs) Thank you! It's not something I've shared a lot, but it's great –

Beebe: I'm very touched that you did. I think it would be very hard to admit in this culture, but I wish I had done that after my mother died. It's the sort of thing my mother and I would have done.

Dr. Dave: I was going to ask you if, because you did note that movies can be healing, and I was going to ask if an example came to mind of a movie healing in your own life.

Beebe: Well, I do remember... This is sort of a simple story, but it was during the reading period at Harvard when I was in maybe my second year at Harvard, and one of the things that happen to you when you go to those great colleges is that you get – I don't know where the time goes – but you have a lot of freedom. And you come up to the reading period and your exams are looming, and you haven't done all the reading. You attended the classes, but you're way behind...

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Beebe: You maybe have gotten your term paper in, or maybe you got an extension on it; turned it in late. And then suddenly you have the daunting task of, you know... We still dream about that all the time: the exam on the course we never attended, or we miss the exam...

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Right!

Beebe: My God, if we have that dream once, we have it - It's very traumatic.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Beebe: And so here's the reading period, and I'm just, I'm just beside myself with the feeling that I cannot possibly pull this together. And well, they're showing Bogart and Bacall movies, and so I go to see [The Big Sleep](#) for the first time – that wonderful 1946 film with Bogart and Bacall. I think that's the one. The two great ones are that and [To Have and Have Not](#). But I think it was [The Big Sleep](#) that was actually the one that I went to this particular day. And it's just filled with wonderful interactions between the two of them, and other things. And the movie is a [Howard Hawks](#) movie. It put me in such a good mood – such an absolutely good mood – that I stayed in a good mood throughout the entire reading period, did my work in a spirit of play, and ended up getting very good grades on all my exams.

Dr. Dave: Yeah!

Beebe: And I think the movie did it. And the movie, what it did, was it got me out of work mode...

Dr. Dave: Yeah...

Beebe: ...ego mode, and made, put the idea – the idea that you could make a movie and it could be a game; that the movie – the whole movie – could be fun, rather than a serious effort to explore a phenomenon. And what I just needed was that... If you want to really do something, you have to be able to *play* at it. You have to make it

fun! I learned that from Howard Hawks because he made movies fun. He made it fun. And he's one of the great auteurs, and his movies are filled with the spirit of play. And I cannot tell you – if you come from a Protestant work ethic – how enlivening that is! And I guess there's the feminine in that, too.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Boy, I wish we –

Beebe: (inaudible) Lauren Bacall, who played at being a vamp.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Beebe: And she was more sexy than all the serious ones ever thought of being.

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm... Boy, we're running short on time here. There's so much more that I would like to discuss with you. As we close it off, I wanted to say that I was surprised not to see any references to the films of [Fellini](#) in the book. [Juliet of the Spirits](#) and [8 1/2](#) - both had a powerful impact on me and seemed to be full of anima material. Also, I think of La Dolce Vita and City of Women. So, how about Fellini?

Beebe: I think that I probably... Right now, Fellini is sort of incubating in my unconscious, like everyone else. We all watched [Bergman](#) and Fellini non-stop through the 60s, and somehow, I kind of burned out on Fellini...

Dr. Dave: Wow.

Beebe: ...at a certain level. I think part of the problem is that Fellini is so aggressively Jungian. You've heard the story that Fellini had a Jungian consultant?

Dr. Dave: No, I didn't know that.

Beebe: Peter Aman (ph), who is a Jungian analyst now worked with him on, at the time of Juliet of the Spirits and particularly at the time of the making of [the Satyricon](#). There's a very funny story about Fellini. Fellini, back in the 1950s... The Italian phone system was very bad, and Fellini was trying to get someone on the phone, and he got... Rather than get the person he was looking for, somehow the phone company connected him with a man named [Ernst Bernhardt](#), who was a leading Jungian analyst in Rome. And so he said, when he gets on the phone he says, "Are you so-and-so?" "Oh, no, no, I'm Bernhardt, the Jungian analyst." So Fellini, "Oh, sorry," and puts down the phone. Well, about a week or ten days later, Fellini is calling someone else and the same – someone different, and the same thing happens. He gets the same man! (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Beebe: Fellini says, “I think this is telling me something.” So, he goes into analysis with Bernhardt for...

Dr. Dave: Oh, what a story!

Beebe: So he got (laughs) ... But the trouble is that the Jungian ideology is somehow a little bit too evident, and so I began... What I felt was that it's not quite *pure* in Fellini. Is he illustrating Jungian ideas or is he really working with material that is authentically emerging because it's the best way to say something, or is there a touch of ideology here? And I suppose I didn't want anyone who was more consciously Jungian, because it doesn't feel like it's really evidence for anything except adherence to an ideology. I was more looking for things that emerge a little more naturally out of a director. And... I mean, Hitchcock was aware of Jung, but I don't think when he created the character of Marnie that he was simply being Jungian. In fact, he came up with an archetypal presentation that I've argued is different from the anima and that wasn't formulated by anyone. I'm the first person – first Jungian – to formulate the idea of an opposing personality, yet I think Hitchcock was the director who best visualized it. So, there I feel we're dealing with something that the alchemists would call “*imaginatio vera*” – the *true* imagination as opposed to illustrating received ideas. I would have the same problem if I were doing painting and were looking for Christian elements with consciously Christian painting, because it would be hard to tell whether they were illustrating the Bible or that they're really channeling true Christian imagery. Now, all this is implicit in the culture, anyway; none of us are free of culture. But it's when it's so conscious, it's harder for me to know... Marvelous as some of Fellini's images are, it's hard to believe that he's always just dialoguing with presented images as opposed to, in a way, playing with received ideas. And that's a little off the field of what I like to study.

Dr. Dave: Okay, well, that's certainly new information to me. And, I think that I had not really discovered Jungian thought, or wasn't into it to the degree that I have been since the time that I was most influenced by the Fellini films. So in a way, they may have softened me up to be more receptive.

Beebe: Right, right, right. And there's no question that Fellini's a great filmmaker. I'd recommend a lovely film that I do think is about the anima and the persona called [Ginger and Fred](#), which is about a song-and-dance team that, in the 30s, had been kind of an Italian imitation of Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire. And it's done with Giulietta Masina, who was the Ginger Rogers, and Marcello Mastroianni, who was the Fred Astaire in Italian show halls. And now they're being reunited in age on television. And she has it together still and has all the wonderful talent, but he has begun to fail, physically. And so then you have the marvelous example of the anima of the artist is still there, but the technical agility has begun to fail. And the way Fellini does that pas de deux between these two parts of the personality as we get, particularly as we get older, is so touching, and it's very authentically imagined. And there I don't think he's illustrating Jungian ideas. I think he's

talking about something that actually happened to him, and it's absolutely marvelous! So I recommend that as a wonderful story about the creative life and its evolution.

Dr. Dave: Well, thank you for that recommendation. I'll have to see if maybe I can get it through Netflix or find it somewhere else.

Beebe: Ginger and Fred.

Dr. Dave: Ginger and Fred. Well, I'm afraid we're going to have to close it off. As I said, maybe we'll have to do it again sometime. Dr. John Beebe, thanks so much for being my guest again on Shrink Rap Radio.

Beebe: Well, David, you are such a wonderful interviewer. You gave me a lot of space, and I thank you and your listeners.

Dr. Dave: Thank you.