# *Soylent Green-1973*

Film Analysis (Quiz-1)

In a future where the world is overcrowded and falling apart, a detective investigates a murder and discovers that the main food source, Soylent Green, is made from something shocking. He tries to reveal this disturbing truth to everyone. Beneath the surface of this gripping narrative, several psychoanalytic themes emerge, shedding light on the characters' psychological struggles in the face of a deteriorating world.

*In this analysis, we'll explore three key psychoanalytic elements within the film:*

## 1) Denial

The heart of the film's intrigue lies in the unsettling secret surrounding Soylent Green, a food product portrayed as a nutritional savior for the masses. However, this seemingly benign sustenance conceals a horrifying truth. From a psychoanalytic perspective, Soylent Green can be viewed as a symbol of societal repression and denial. The population willingly consumes this food source without questioning its origin, reflecting a collective denial of the harsh reality that permeates their world. This pervasive blindness to uncomfortable truths mirrors the defense mechanisms humans employ to protect their psyches from distressing information.

 Detective Frank Thorn, played by Charlton Heston, serves as the audience's guide through this nightmarish future. Yet even Thorn is not immune to the mechanisms of repression. His recurring flashbacks to lush forests and untamed nature hint at a deeper longing for a world far removed from the urban dystopia he navigates daily. This longing, however, remains buried within him as he grapples with the necessity of surviving in his harsh environment. In psychoanalytic terms, Thorn's repression of his desire for a more natural world could be seen as a coping mechanism, enabling him to function within the confines of his crumbling society.

## 2) Environmental Stress

"Soylent Green" presents a world on the brink of collapse due to overpopulation and environmental degradation. The consequences of this overbearing stress on the environment are evident in the extreme heat and pervasive pollution that envelops the city. These relentless environmental stressors have a profound impact on the characters' mental states. They are forced to adapt to a hostile, unforgiving environment, which, from a psychoanalytic perspective, can be seen as a perpetual source of psychological stress.

The society depicted in "Soylent Green" is perpetually anxious about the future, primarily due to environmental stressors. The fear of scarcity, famine, and the impending collapse of their ecosystem creates a constant undercurrent of anxiety. This collective anxiety mirrors real-world concerns about environmental degradation and the potential collapse of critical ecosystems. From a psychoanalytic

standpoint, this collective anxiety can be understood as a form of collective trauma, impacting not only individual psyches but the collective psyche of society as a whole.

## 3) Personal Space

In the film, the characters are confined to cramped, overcrowded living spaces. These tiny apartments symbolize the absence of personal space and the emotional confinement experienced by the inhabitants. Despite their physical proximity, the characters often feel isolated and disconnected from one another. Their inability to find meaningful personal space within their living quarters underscores the loneliness and emotional detachment prevalent in their lives.

Beyond physical confinement, "Soylent Green" portrays a world where personal boundaries are frequently violated, both physically and emotionally. The invasive surveillance, lack of privacy, and intrusion into intimate moments leave individuals feeling powerless and exposed. From a psychoanalytic perspective, this invasion of personal space can be seen as a reflection of the characters' loss of autonomy and agency, contributing to their overall sense of vulnerability and disempowerment.

One moment in the film takes the characters to the ocean, a vast and open space in stark contrast to the confines of their crowded city. This scene symbolizes their deep desire for more personal space and freedom. The ocean represents a longing for expansiveness and liberation from their constricted urban lives.

*In conclusion, the themes provide a thought-provoking exploration of the human psyche under extreme societal conditions, offering parallels to real-world challenges and the enduring human capacity to adapt and resist, even in the face of overwhelming disasters.*