How do we make a judgment about Richie?



Richie and the scene's account of him

Richie is learning a job. The images, sounds and sequence select what we learn about that experience. Being older does not necessarily give him a higher rank at work.

Representation produces meaning

> “To put it briefly, representation is the production of meaning through language.”

Hall, §1.1, printed p. 2

Language includes signs and images. We come to know a person through selected words and images. These can never show us their whole life.

Reading and context

From a detail to a social meaning

What can we observe?

A worker polishes forks. This is an action we can locate.

What is selected?

Garrett speaks while the image stays on Richie listening.

What might the choice suggest?

The training may give the work dignity. Garrett's calm correction may also make workplace discipline seem natural.

READING COMPANION · OPTIONAL VIDEO PASSAGE

Hall on a meaning that is not fixed



Hall speaks about meaning through representation. The surrounding seven-minute video is an explanation by The Media Insider.

The Media Insider · linked explanation, 1:55–2:16 · Stuart Hall speaks.

Richie and Garrett at the fork station



Richie’s age does not give him the authority of the trainer. What do his listening face and Garrett’s continuing voice let us infer?

Richie works beside Chef Terry



Chef Terry runs the kitchen. Working beside Richie can change how service, rank and expertise appear. Which detail makes that reading possible?

Why show the listener?

A voice

Garrett explains why the work matters. We can hear his authority.

A face

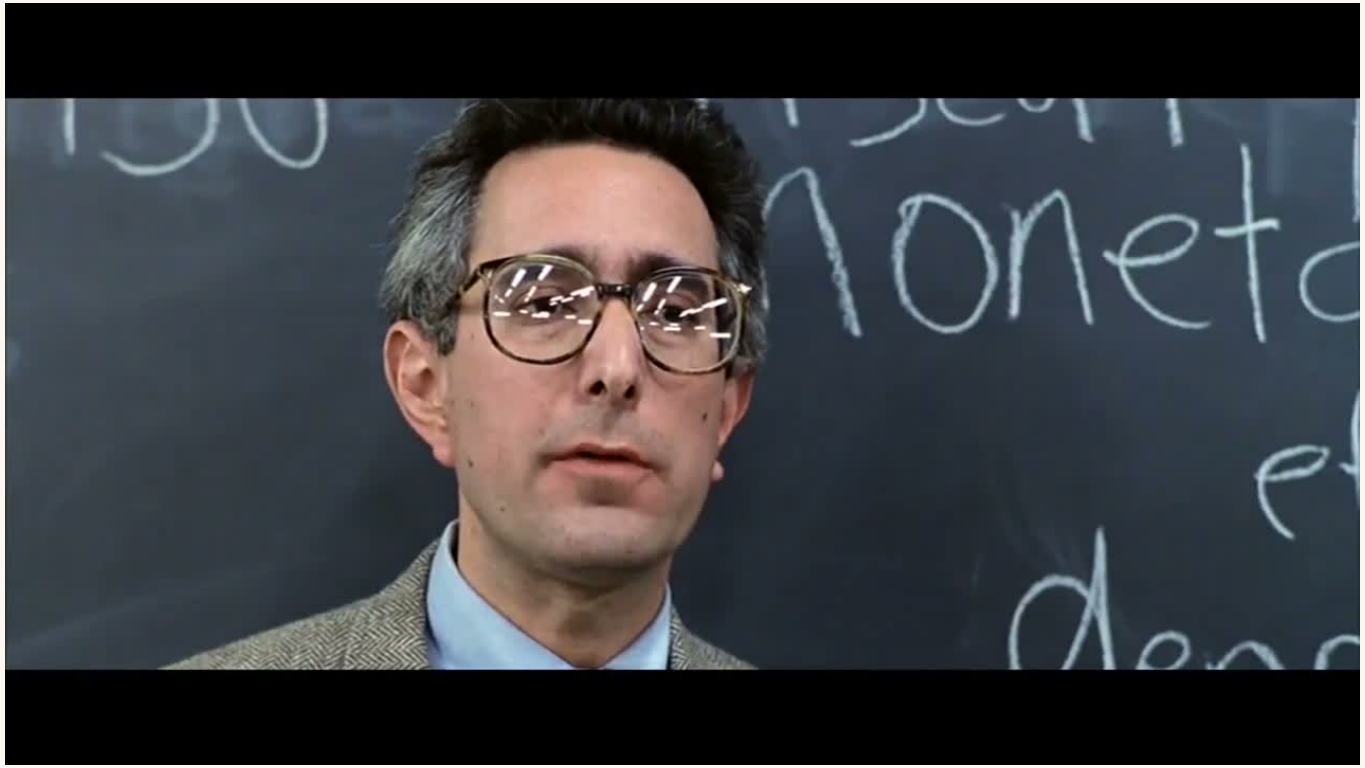
The cut lets us watch Richie respond while Garrett speaks.

A question

What changes when a film shows the listener, the speaker or neither?

JOHN HUGHES · FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF, 1986

Ferris Bueller: "Anyone? Anyone?"



The teacher keeps speaking. Watch the pupils while you listen to his delivery.

What do their faces make you think about the lesson?

Economics lecture · 1:18 · original English audio

The pupils’ reactions shape our view of the teacher



His flat delivery continues over faces that suggest boredom or fatigue.

The contrast can make his authority look ineffective.

Would the same speech mean the same thing over attentive faces?

Reaction shot: the person receiving the speech becomes visible.

Persona: Elisabet listens



Alma is Elisabet’s nurse. Elisabet has stopped speaking.

Alma gives an account of the pressure Elisabet felt to become a mother.

Watch Elisabet receiving that account.

Persona: Alma speaks



The monologue begins again. This time the image shows Alma speaking.

Compare your attention to her expression and tone with your attention to Elisabet’s response.

The repeated speech redirects attention





With Elisabet, we watch for a response to the accusation. With Alma, we study the person making it. Seeing a face does not tell us exactly what someone is thinking.

Elisabet listening, left · Alma speaking, right · actual frames from the two extracts

Ozu: what happens when a face disappears?



Noriko expects to marry and leave her widowed father.

At an inn in Kyoto, she talks beside him before sleep.

A cut replaces the face with a view of the room. What does that choice withhold?

Film frame from Late Spring · the image is studied here as part of a sequence.

LATE SPRING · THREE SELECTED FRAMES IN SOURCE ORDER

We do not see the expression change







Noriko before → the vase and window → Noriko after. We infer a change without watching her expression change continuously.

These frames isolate the first vase interruption. They are not the complete scene’s shot list.

Richie: a space for the viewer’s feeling



“its presence is also a space”

The missing facial transition can invite us to imagine Noriko’s changing feelings.

The interpretation depends on the adjacent faces and the approaching separation.

Richie quoted in Abé Mark Nornes, “The Riddle of the Vase” (2007), p. 82.

Schrader: beyond a particular loss



"the inner unity of all things"

Schrader reads the still object as a move toward permanence beyond Noriko's changing situation.

This is one spiritual interpretation of the cut. What in the image supports it?

Schrader quoted and discussed in Nornes (2007), p. 81.

Thompson: the interruption matters



"a non-narrative element wedged into the action"

The cut can pull attention away from Noriko and delay an emotional climax.

Does the interruption deepen feeling, or interrupt our concentration on her?

Thompson, pp. 339–340, quoted in Nornes (2007), p. 85.

Bordwell: whose point of view?





“fraying of POV cues”: showing an object after a face does not prove that we see through that person’s eyes. Check the eyelines and the object’s position.

Bordwell, p. 117, quoted in Nornes (2007), p. 85.

Deleuze: change and duration







“There is becoming, change, passage.” Noriko’s expression changes while the vase keeps its form. For Deleuze, this contrast makes us notice time passing.

Cinema 2, chapter 1, §2, pp. 13–18; quotation p. 17 · publisher preview inspected.

Hasumi: look beyond the named object



Calling this a vase shot selects one part of the image.

Look again at the shoji screen, shadows, light and the object’s position.

What does your first label leave out?

Miyao, Ozu & the Ethics of Indeterminacy (2026), preface, p. xi.

One cut, competing explanations

What the image shows

A listening face can suggest attention, boredom or distress. The meaning depends on voice, performance, sequence and context.

What the image withholds

An object shot may invite an emotional response or interrupt our attention to a person. Use the surrounding frames to explain one reading, then test another.

The sources behind the comparison

The critical dispute

Abé Mark Nornes, “The Riddle of the Vase,” in Japanese Cinema: Texts and Contexts (2007), pp. 78–89.

Richie, Schrader, Thompson and Bordwell are quoted through this chapter.

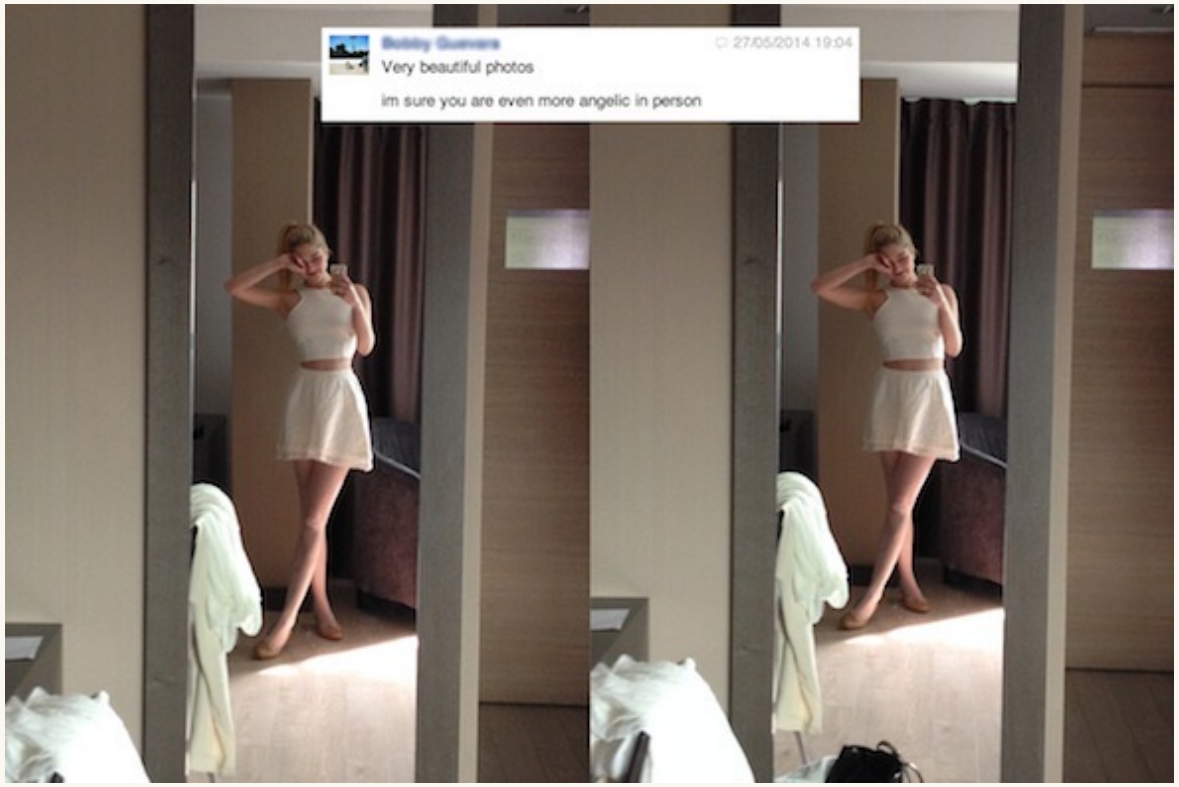
Time and the whole frame

Gilles Deleuze, Cinema 2: The Time-Image (1989), chapter 1, §2, pp. 13–18.

Daisuke Miyao, Ozu & the Ethics of Indeterminacy (2026), preface, p. xi, on Hasumi.

Nerdwriter1’s “Why Did Ozu Cut To A Vase?” (2020) supplied the research starting point and film quotation.

What can we infer from this profile?



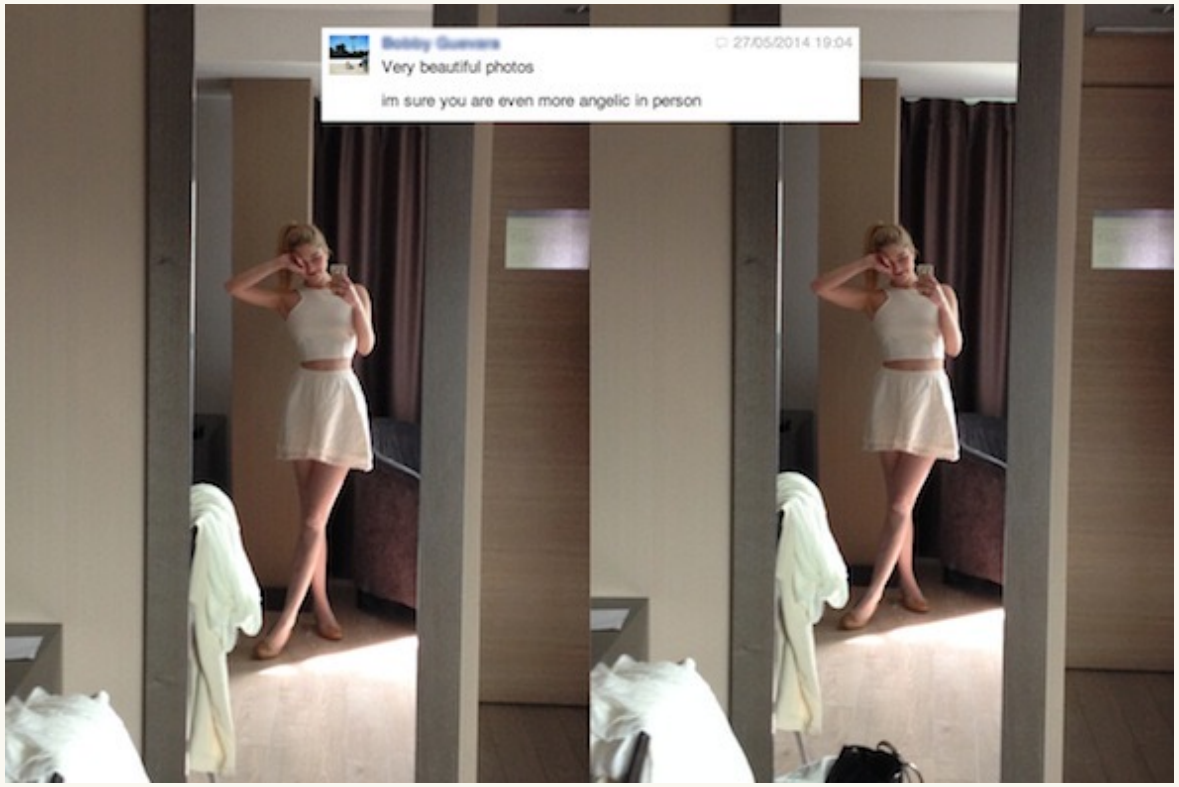
Look at the room, clothing, pose and repeated mirror image.

What kind of life does the photograph suggest?

Which detail supports your inference?

Amalia Ulman · Excellences & Perfections, 2014 · detail, courtesy of the artist / Rhizome

A scripted life on Instagram



Ulman scripted a social media performance from April to September 2014.

Clothes, interiors, captions and posting patterns made a changing persona recognizable.

The familiar profile format made the scripted life look like an ordinary account.

Context changes our reading

A familiar account

A mirror selfie can suggest access to someone’s private life. A polished room and clothing can make a particular lifestyle appear desirable.

A staged account

Once we know the project was scripted, we can examine the codes that made it believable. The photograph shows an appearance. It does not establish a complete identity.

BEEF: whose Asian American life?





Danny faces debt and insecure work. Amy lives in a wealthy home and negotiates a business sale. What differences become visible within Asian American experience?

BEEF, 2023 · Danny, left · Amy, right · actual frames from today’s extracts

HELEN HUANG · BEEF COSTUME DESIGNER

“Asian Americans are not a monolith.”





Huang distinguishes ethnic backgrounds, family histories and economic circumstances. Amy’s restrained boutique wardrobe and Danny’s thrift-store clothes help make those differences visible.

Helen Huang, The Costume Designer, 2023 · quotation excerpt · frames from BEEF

BEEF · DANNY AND ISAAC · SEASON 1, EPISODE 2

Danny: money, work and dependence



Listen for debt, the truck and the risk of doing business.

How do dialogue, clothing and the setting place Danny economically?

What relationship does money create between the men?

English captions · continuous classroom extract · 0:54

Amy: wealth and the public self



Watch the home, clothing and controlled conversation.

How does the business sale shape Amy’s need to manage what Naomi knows?

Compare her opportunities and pressures with Danny’s.

Different lives within a social category

Support the comparison

Use one costume or setting detail and one line or action from each character. Explain how wealth and work shape their different situations.

Explain the comparison's limits

Class interacts with ethnicity, gender and family history. Neither character represents all Asian American lives. What does your selected evidence leave out?

11 NOVEMBER, SECOND PERIOD · PRINTED PP. 148–149

What makes a convention useful?

“What effect would it have on your audience to break the codes and conventions of the genre you are working in?”

Marshall, Naisbett & Stoklosa, p. 149

A familiar choice can change whom we notice. In “Forks,” whose face stays on screen when Garrett explains the work?

What does the viewer learn here?

Code and convention

A code is a choice such as a change of sound perspective. A convention is an expectation built through repeated examples. One film cannot establish a pattern by itself.

An opening study

Identify the moment, name the change and explain whose experience it emphasizes. Compare a second opening to test whether the choice is conventional.

COMPONENT 1 · WORKED EXAMPLE

An opening entry, before and after

First draft

“Garrett talks to Richie. The scene shows respect.” This names a judgment without locating the choice that invites it.

Revision

“Garrett’s voice continues across the cut to Richie. We can read the older trainee’s response while we hear the younger trainer explain the job.”

The first and second sentences are authored teaching samples, not Cambridge exemplar answers.