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**Senior**

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Summary:

Psychological Cinema: A Method

Film critic and philosopher Siegfried Kracauer, in his work "From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film," shows how the psychological disposition of the German people after World War 1 is reflected in the cinema of the era. By reflecting deeply on that cinema, Kracauer shows that social and political ideology influence and frame even the films with the least explicitly "political" content. Kracauer identifies three primary types of films in that German cinema: tyranny films, instinct films and destiny films. By critically analyzing popular films like The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Metropolis, M and more, Kracauer argues that the unconscious motivations of the German people that would eventually lead to the rise of Hitler can be seen in cinema as early as 1921.

With some help from other thinkers, this project attempts to extrapolate a tool or a lens from Kracauer's work with which one can analyze the reflections that cinema and mass psychology cast on each other. Then, by using the method, the project attempts to identify and explain the tendencies and ideologies present in popular contemporary film. By identifying the types of films and media currently popular, like the serial killer and superhero genres, and the "chosen one trope", and then analyzing the psychology that frames them, one can come to a better understanding of the trends in current politics and perhaps even predict to where they might lead.