

American Movie Audiences: From the Turn of the Century to the Early Sound Era

By Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby (eds.)

London: British Film Institute, 1999. ISBN 0-85170-722-X (hbk); ISBN 0-85170-721-1 (pbk). vi + 186 pp., 24 illustrations. £42.50 (hbk); £14.99 (pbk)

A review by Steven T. Sheehan, Indiana University, USA

Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby have collected the research of several scholars working in the burgeoning field of audience and reception studies. As Stokes indicates in the volume's introduction, two overarching questions have driven studies of early cinema audiences in America. First, scholars have debated over exactly who attended nickelodeons and silent cinema. Some assert theaters were patronized exclusively by the working class, while others posit a more diverse audience. A second topic of debate has centered around the relationship among audiences, exhibitors, and film text, examining cinema's role in elite attempts to discipline working-class audiences. Each of the authors in this collection addresses these traditional questions while pushing the scholarship in new directions. "Collectively," Stokes states

these essays emphasise the diversity of movie-going experience in the first decades of the century, suggesting that however much the movies themselves became standardised in production, distribution, and even exhibition, their audiences remained far from unified, either in terms of their composition or responses. (9)

The first three essays explore the ethnic and racial construction of film audiences. Together, they uncover the link between early cinema and the formation of ethnic identities in the turn-of-the-century American city. Judith Thissen, in her essay on Jewish audiences on New York's Lower East Side, argues that these audiences slowed efforts to standardise and "Americanise" the cinema in 1908-9. Audience demands forced Lower East Side exhibitors to retain traditional ethnic material in their programs. Giorgio Bertellini argues that regionally diverse Italian-American immigrants developed a sense of shared "Italianness" by attending imported Italian films. Finally, Alison Griffiths and James Latham demonstrate that, because African-Americans first migrated to Harlem during the proliferation of nickelodeons and movie theaters, debates over cinema in Harlem became intertwined with racial discourse.

The next two essays focus on reformers' concern with children in film audiences. The authors state that progressives often focused on children in their efforts to regulate film because reformers considered children uniquely susceptible to cinema's influence. Furthermore discussions of childhood often applied to "synechodocal" groups such as workers, immigrants, and women. In a co-authored essay, Roberta Pearson and William Uricchio argue that reformers considered banning children from movie theaters and regulating film content before finally deciding to regulate theater space. In contrast, Lee Grieveson argues

that Chicago established a police censorship board in 1907 that moved away from attempts to order theater space and toward controlling film content.

Essays by Kathryn Fuller, Leslie Debauche, and Gregory Waller explore local film audiences and attempts to standardise their behavior. Fuller argues that while the narrative film may have become the dominant cinematic form in New York City, upstate audiences continued to demand and experience a "cinema of attractions" well into the twentieth century. In contrast, Debauche asserts that although Milwaukee's German, isolationist, and socialist heritage could conceivably have led to peculiar forms of film reception during World War I, the city's audiences bought liberty bonds, sang along with patriotic songs, and gladly watched anti-German films. Finally, Waller argues that the concept of "regionalism" itself was the product of an intersection between local cultures and the emerging national popular culture. He contends a distinctive regional "mountain" culture developed among Kentucky audiences only as that culture became commodified and nationally distributed in the form of country and western music.

Essays by Steven Ross and Thomas Doherty make general claims about film audiences and the place of cinema in early twentieth-century American society. Within his analysis of working-class audiences and radical filmmaking, Ross issues a manifesto on the importance of reception studies. He argues that film had, and still has, "the power...to shape the ways in which millions of Americans think about class and class conflict." (92) Moreover, his essay pointedly broadens conventional notions of "audience" and "reception" to include pressure groups and their attempts to control film content and theater space. Doherty's article surveys film reception in the early sound era and argues against the work of such scholars as Lawrence Levine and Miriam Hansen on the disciplining of audiences by stating that film reception remained a communal, active, and participatory process in the early sound era.

This volume collects prominent recent research in the burgeoning field of audience and reception studies in ten uniformly well-researched and clearly written essays. It leaves some areas of film reception untouched. For example, the work never explores the gendered constructions of audiences, thereby ignoring the feminist criticism that has characterized studies of spectatorship since the 1970s. Yet by compiling contemporary research on American film audiences, framing the debates over audience reception, and indicating areas for future exploration, this volume marks a promising start to a developing field.

Artists in the Audience: Cults, Camp, and American Film Criticism

By Greg Taylor

Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999. ISBN 0-691-00421-8. x + 193 pp., 11 illustrations. \$18.95 (pbk)

A review by Raymond J. Haberski, Jr., Marian College, Indianapolis, USA

We take it for granted today that movies are art. Yet what remains unclear is why we accept this as fact. Is it because movies are so obviously artistic, or that critics tell us what is and is not art, or, as Greg Taylor contends, is it because the audience for movies can, without much trouble, turn an evening out (or in) into a significant cultural experience.

Taylor, an assistant professor of film studies at the Purchase campus of the State University of New York, takes up the process that transformed audiences into art critics. While his book traverses the margins of movie culture, his message has more mainstream appeal. Taylor's primary subjects are Manny Farber and Parker Tyler, two American artists he refers to as vanguard movie critics who wrote from the late 1940s through the 1960s. Their contribution to movie criticism was to reevaluate movies as high art phenomena and thereby provide the tools necessary for audiences to regard movies as something more than mindless entertainment.

Farber and Tyler are important, though relatively obscure figures in film history whose ideas were incorporated in and then overshadowed by the more famous (or infamous) criticism of Americans Andrew Sarris and Jonas Mekas. As modernists whose views on movies ran against the avant-garde as well as middle-class tastemakers, neither Farber nor Tyler actively cultivated a following. Yet by opposing both groups, Farber and Tyler made it slightly rebellious and therefore attractive to take mass culture seriously. Taylor suggests that "If we now tend to assume pop culture to be innately complex, and empowered/artistic spectatorship to be innately beneficial, we...walk in the footsteps of radical modernists who saw movies as entertaining, malleable junk useful for keeping authentic high culture afloat in middlebrow America" (ix).

Manny Farber, a painter and carpenter, and Parker Tyler, a poet, playwright, and novelist, were part of the artistically rich environment of New York City's Greenwich Village of the 1940s and 1950s. And both, as Taylor explains, were "intensely committed to promoting an authentic highbrow modernism" to fill the void left by the mainstreaming of abstract expressionism (50). Unhappy with the increasing commercialism of the arts community, Farber and Tyler, somewhat ironically, turned to movies as an untapped source of inspiration for their criticism. But they did so, however, not merely to praise film but to counter middlebrow taste in art and the burgeoning bohemian capitalism it was supporting. They forged an approach, Taylor effectively illustrates, that was "fueled by the vanguard desire to lead but not be followed: this may have been an example of creative, resistant spectatorship,

but ultimately it was one whose purity, in practice, could be maintained only by an elite" (58).

The value of Taylor's argument rests in that last insight. He has done a commendable job detailing the difficulty of maintaining the originality of one's perspective in an increasingly mass-mediated environment. The whole idea of "critic-as-artist" - one that received its best reflection, as Taylor notes, in the work of Oscar Wilde - was something sustainable in a world decidedly more stratified and less commercialized. Farber and Tyler struggled heroically to distinguish their visions of camp and cult criticism from commodified versions of these ideas. Within a couple of decades, the two critics had gone from vanguard rebels to vanguard reactionaries discouraged by violations of their modernist faith.

But what did they expect? "In attacking middlebrow aesthetic judgment," Taylor points out, "vanguard criticism had ultimately made a work's value and interest a function more of the intellectual's creative skills than of the artist's" (96). Thus it was not such a stretch when in the 1960s critics championed either Hollywood pictures (Sarris) or the largely deplorable work of the American Underground (Mekas) as profound creations when, really, they were only "junk." This new breed of criticism might have sounded modernist, but it lacked the rigor and aesthetics that had informed the work of Farber and Tyler. And, as Taylor smartly concludes, "If film could be taken seriously as art, the time for critical fun was over" (72).

Indeed, by the end of this book, one longs for the kind of critics Farber and Tyler were - perceptive, witty, and downright elitist - if only to feel a sense of inspiration that comes from reading truly thoughtful critiques. Instead, the field of film criticism, Taylor believes, has drifted further away from the rest of us, "leaving middlebrow culture to its own devices" and thus failing to engage "the larger possibilities of movie art, and the larger obligations of criticism" (157).

While Taylor's subject should have appeal to a general audience, his writing at times feels heavy with terminology drawn from the field of cultural studies - the branch of academia that, ironically, he believes has pulled film criticism away from the public arena. Moreover, one is unsure, for example, what the difference is between "authority" and "privileged authority" or a "critic" and an "Arnoldian critic." Such quibbles though are small and should not discourage readers from investigating with Taylor the world of vanguard film criticism.

Contemporary French Cinema: An Introduction

By Guy Austin

Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1996. ISBN0719046106. 190 pp., 27 illustrations. £45.00 (hbk); £11.99 (pbk)

A review by J. Emmett Winn, Auburn University, USA

Guy Austin in *Contemporary French Cinema: An Introduction* successfully takes on the task of charting the last twenty five years of French cinema and explaining its genre developments. In doing so, the author refutes the critics who have been predicting the demise of French cinema since the New Wave. In a clearly written and well argued book that uses analyses of over one hundred movies Austin provides what the title promises, an introduction to contemporary French film.

The manuscript has a straightforward composition that makes it highly suitable for students and enthusiasts of French filmmaking. It is divided into seven chapters with the first being a handily written summary of French moviemaking from 1895 until 1968. Each of the remaining chapters is devoted to a particular genre with a single page conclusion at the end of the work. The strengths and weaknesses of the text are best discussed in terms of these various chapters, therefore, I will organize this review by grouping the topics in this way for discussion.

The most valuable and helpful chapters are those devoted to the history of French cinema, representations of sexuality, the *polar* films, and the heritage film. The introduction seems to take on an impossible job, a sixteen page summary of the first seventy three years of filmmaking in France. Yet Austin does a masterful job of laying out the most significant issues without either boring the experienced reader by rehashing a detailed history of French moviemaking or belaboring the point for novice readers mainly interested in learning about newer films. I would recommend this brief summary to almost any reader regardless of their knowledge and experience with French film history simply because it does an excellent job of summarizing some of the key issues and developments in French movie history.

"Representations of Sexuality" is one of the high points of this book. Austin begins by explaining with style and insight the pornographic turn in mainstream French cinema in 1974. This chapter also covers the major topics and trends concerning sexuality in cinema including woman as object and subject, misogyny, spectatorship, male representations of sexuality, and gay cinema. Moreover, Austin provides a perceptive look at Bunuel's *Cet Obscur Object du Desir* and a welcome and knowledgeable section on the changing representation of AIDS in French cinema.

"The *Polar*" is a superior chapter that situates the French thriller historically in terms of one of its key evolving genre. Austin plots the development of the genre from its earliest days of the silent era to the naturalistic *polar* and the docu-drama. In the course of critiquing several

important films the author links the *polar* to *film noir* and the gangster film in terms of both style and subject matter.

The book culminates with a discussion of the heritage film. Austin weaves together an interesting and convincing argument for the development of these films because of industry and political influence, particularly during the Mitterrand presidency. Further, the author covers the major influences of the genre, including painting, music and literature, and provides much understanding in terms of the characteristic elements of these films.

The weaker sections in this text are the chapters "Women Filmmakers in France," "The *Cinema du Look* and Fantasy Film," and the book's conclusion. "Women Filmmakers in France" is a bit of a disappointment, despite its perspicacious commentary, as I join with many others who would like to see women filmmakers not artificially separated from male filmmakers in histories and other types of critical work on film. Although moviemaking is still predominately male-dominated internationally, the continued separation of women by scholars and historians seems to do more to encourage this trend than to work against its unfair attitude. I do not believe that Austin is trying to hurt women filmmakers by doing this, I just hate to see this type of distinction made in a finely written text.

In considering the *cinema du look* the author covers the major themes of style over substance in what is more of an auteurist "consistent style and themes" approach concerning the movies of Beineix, Besson and Carax. There is nothing wrong with Austin's method here and I do not disagree with the criticism but I do find the socio-political and culturally based arguments weaker in this chapter. Furthermore, I contend that *auteur* critiques are more appropriate for longer discussions that can more fully investigate the *auteurs'* lives and *oeuvres*.

Finally, the single page conclusion leaves the reader wanting more of Austin's thoughts on the future of these genres and French filmmaking in general. Yet, even with these problems, I can highly recommend this book to both the serious student of French moviemaking and earnest enthusiast alike.

Endless Night: Cinema and Psychoanalysis, Parallel Histories

By Janet Bergstrom (ed.)

Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999. ISBN0520207475. 305 pp., 41 illustrations. \$45.00 (£28.50) (hbk); \$17.95 (£11.50) (pbk)

A review by Joan Hawkins, Indiana University, USA

It's always difficult to review an anthology, since what's at stake is both the quality of the individual essays in the book and the organizing principle behind the book's overarching project. This anthology is particularly difficult to review, because it grows out of what appears to be a vexed project. The idea for the volume grew out of a 1993 conference titled "Psychoanalysis and Cinema: Parallel Histories," sponsored by the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Critical Studies and the Human Sciences. The conference brought together practicing psychoanalysts and film theorists working from a psychoanalytic perspective and provided a forum of exchange.

Now there's nothing particularly unusual about a volume which collects the noteworthy papers presented at a conference and attempts to contextualize them in a shared theoretical or thematic frame. But such volumes usually emerge from highly successful conferences, the kind the participants don't want to end. In distinct counterpoint to the norm, this volume is the result of a conference at which "dialogue between constituencies seemed blocked to a surprising degree; in fact one came away from the conference with the strong impression of nonconvergence, on the whole, of lines of inquiry and frames of reference, the sense that these 'parallel histories' of cinema and psychoanalysis were very far apart indeed" (1). One might say this is a volume which grew out of a failed conference, one which never quite succeeded in achieving the kind of exchange it had aimed to foster. In that sense, *Endless Night* represents an interesting attempt to recuperate and recast a project which didn't quite proceed as planned. Like Freud's own fascinating case study, *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, the book has a therapeutic project of its own. And I'm not sure it entirely succeeds in its attempt to revisit the conference and bring the "parallel histories" of cinema and psychoanalysis closer together.

That said, the book is remarkably rich. Most of the essays in *Endless Night* are by film scholars, and many of them were written subsequent to the conference. Most remarkable is Stephen Heath's brilliant essay, "Cinema and Psychoanalysis: Parallel Histories," which begins with a quote from Lou-Andréas-Salomé and moves on to problematize the "Lacanian conceptual framework as it was more or less formalized in 1970s film theory" (7). In the process, Heath discusses Pabst's *Secrets of the Soul* (1926), Freud's own ambivalence about the cinema, shifts and fluctuations in psychoanalytic film theory, ideology, Lacan and Žižek. It is a stunning piece of work, one which deserves a place on every film theory syllabus.

Mary Ann Doane's essay "Temporality, Storage, Legibility: Freud, Marey and the Cinema" (one of the few previously published essays in the book) addresses the problem of early

cinema's relation to time, discussing it in terms of the work of Freud (whose reluctance to theorize time is a central concern of the article) and that of photographer Etienne-Jules Marey, whom Doane identifies as the "primary scientific precursor of the cinema" (67). Marey spent his life "generating careful and detailed depictions of bodies in movement, first through graphic inscriptors and, later, photographic apparatuses. Marey labeled his photographic technique 'chronophotography,' literally the photography of time" (67).

Marey's photographs, some of which are reproduced in the book, are beautiful. Moving from something approaching time-lapse photography to something which looks more like computer art, Marey captured the body in both its most physical and most abstract aspects. In that sense, his photos are a good preparation for Zizek's "Cyberspace or the Unbearable Closure of Being," which considers cyber theory "as it impacts psychoanalytic conceptions of the subject, principally through the vehicle of 'interface' which he correlates with the frame and the Other Scene"(8). Here, as Bergstrom notes, "we encounter the high-energy Zizek-effect at its most positively charged," as we move through a dizzying and exhilarating array of textual, cinematic and cyber references. It's Zizek at his best, and while it's not always entirely clear whether it really belongs in the volume on psychoanalysis and the cinema, it's so full of sheer brio that ultimately one doesn't care whether it "fits" or not.

The other essays in the volume cover some interesting ground: John Huston's 1962 film *Freud*, Sartre's *The Freud Scenario*, Hitchcock's "trilogy" of *Vertigo* (1958), *North by Northwest* (1959), and *Psycho* (1960), melodrama, the films of Chantal Akerman, and Sam Wood's delirious cult masterpiece, *King's Row* (1942). The essays, by Janet Bergstrom, Joan Copjec, David James Fisher, Alain de Mijolla, Ayako Saito, Marc Vernet, and Peter Wollen are, for the most part, provocative and interesting. The least interesting to me, were Alain de Mijolla's article, "Freud and the Psychoanalytic Situation on Screen" and Marc Vernet's article on the fetish. And I remain unconvinced by Saito's discussion of Hitchcock, interesting as it often is. But on the whole, I feel this is an excellent volume for anyone interested in psychoanalytic film theory or the applications of psychoanalysis in scholarly work.

Fatal Attractions: Rescripting Romance in Contemporary Literature and Film

By Lynne Pearce and Gina Wisker (eds.)

London: Pluto Press, 1998. ISBN 0-7453-1381-7. 224 pp., £45.00 (hard), £14.99 (soft)

A review by Kathrina Glitre, University of Reading, UK

Love is eternal, or so they say. This collection of fifteen original essays explores changing representations of romance in contemporary fiction, with particular attention paid to those texts which appear to challenge or subvert the institutionalized ideology of love: white boy meets and marries white girl, and they live happily ever after. Pearce and Wisker explicitly reserve the concept of "rescripting" romance for those texts which not only "alter the codes and conventions of traditional romance" (1) but also "actively interrogate and destabilise the institutions in which those conventions have become embedded (e.g., heterosexuality, marriage, monogamy, the family or the prescription for same-race relationships)" (1). Unsurprisingly, few of the texts discussed by contributors succeed in such "rescripting" (and some do not even try), but the diverse mix of literary, film and occasional television texts offers some stimulating alternative approaches: feminist writing and criticism; postcolonial theory; queer theory; lesbian writing; and psychoanalytic structures of desire.

From the perspective of *film* studies, however, the collection is somewhat disappointing. Most of the contributors come from a literature background, and the content is weighted accordingly. Three essays discuss film and literature - specifically women's vampire fictions, Mills and Boon's "Temptation" series (which is unexpectedly compared to screwball comedy), and the "masculine" adventure romance - and three more are dedicated to film. Of these, Barbara Creed's "Abject Desire and *Basic Instinct*: A Tale of Cynical Romance" is the most securely grounded piece of analysis, but Creed fails to deal convincingly with the film's misogynous, homophobic, white male fantasy. Maria Lauret makes vital points about the reactionary return to old-fashioned romance in the AIDS era, focusing her arguments upon the absence of passion in *When Harry Met Sally* (1989) and *Ghost* (1990), but ultimately her analysis is limited to narrative, at the expense of issues of style and comedy. Phyllis Creme psychoanalyses the persistent image of the female face "transformed" by love; her argument that it reflects the regressive desire for unconditional love with the mother is weakened, however, by the lack of corresponding images of male faces (a fact inadequately acknowledged in the final sentences). Also of interest is David Oswell's discussion of *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990) and its television adaptation (1993), which he convincingly argues "celebrates the *failing* of [...] the limits of traditional romance" (158), in part through the refusal to settle into clear binary distinctions. If you are more generally concerned with romance as a genre, then the literature essays offer valuable insights and perspectives - particularly Flora Alexander's overview of feminist fictional critiques of romance (Weldon, Carter, Atwood, etc.) and Lynne Pearce's discussion of the "chronotope" of romantic love in contemporary feminist fiction.

The collection certainly expects prior knowledge of romance criticism (particularly the groundbreaking work of Janice Radway and Tania Modleski), and familiarity with Freudian and Lacanian models of desire. What the essays uniformly lack, however, is any historical context for romantic love: no mention is made of important works such as Denis de Rougemont's *Love in the Western World* (1940), Niklas Luhmann's *Love as Passion* (1982), or even Germaine Greer's section on "Love" in *The Female Eunuch* (1971). Paradoxically, while describing the changing forms of romance narratives, many of the contributors tend to treat "romantic love" as a monolithic given, rather than recognizing its culturally-determined shape-shifting, particularly in relation to the roles of marriage and sex. Similarly, Freudian and Lacanian explanations of desire tend to be accepted as "truth", rather than heterosexist cultural products; Pearce and Wisker hint at the possibility of deconstructing Freud and Lacan's theories as romance narratives in their Introduction (6) but the opportunity is missed. This proves particularly disappointing in relation to Creed's idea of the "cynical romance" of *Basic Instinct* which "constructs a world in which it is impossible to tell whether desire is real or a game of bluff and deception" (179); this description seems to fit Lacan's narrative of desire equally well, especially considering Creed's later characterization of his theory: "love becomes a game in which each sex offers the other what they do not have" (184).

It is Creed's piece which also comes closest to theorizing why these attractions may prove "fatal", predicating desire first upon the Freudian death drive and then more forcefully upon Lacan's nihilistic version of impossible desire for an imaginary unity. It is particularly striking, therefore, that the one essay with explicit claims for "rescripted" romance is Gina Wisker's "If Looks Could Kill: Contemporary Women's Vampire Fictions": such narratives realize the fantasy of eternal love, at the same time as exposing the "self-seeking, predatory energies" (51) which inform conventional romance. Love may be eternal, but in an age of cynical reason, romance is undead.

Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture

By Joanne Hollows

Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000. ISBN 0-7190-4395-6. ix + 229 pp. £9.99 (pbk)

A review by Jacinda Read, De Montfort University, UK

The relationship between feminism and femininity has always been a fraught one, with femininity implicitly characterized in much feminist writing as the "bad other" of feminism. Popular culture, moreover, has frequently been seen as a debased "feminine" realm which, in the form of soap opera, for example, acts as one of the primary ways in which normative femininities are constructed and circulated. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that popular culture has been viewed with suspicion by many feminists. Indeed, even those feminists who have endeavoured to take popular culture seriously have often merely reproduced this opposition between a good feminist identity and a bad feminine one, between the "enlightened" feminist critic and the "false consciousness" of the "ordinary woman". This master opposition between feminism and femininity has, moreover, given rise to a whole series of sub-oppositions between, for example, a politicized (feminist) avant-garde and a depoliticized (feminine) popular culture, an authentic (feminist) folk culture and an inauthentic (feminine) mass culture, the feminist activist and the passive feminine consumer. Unfortunately, rather than seeking to deconstruct these oppositions, much feminist writing on popular culture has taken on a thinly veiled "recruitist" tone - if only the "ordinary woman" would realize the error of her ways we would all be living in a feminist utopia.

That we are not (yet) living in a feminist utopia suggests that this approach is fundamentally flawed. *Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture* is thus a timely critical reappraisal of feminist cultural studies in which Joanne Hollows skilfully traces and problematizes the varied and complex ways in which these oppositions have informed feminist analyses of popular culture. Indeed, that Hollows is clearly both a feminist and a fan of popular culture allows her to retain a tone that is neither over-critical nor over-celebratory, neither recruitist nor recuperative. Nor does the book offer a narrative of progression or decline. Rather, as Hollows points out, the "mistakes" of the past often merely reappear in another guise. Thus, she shows how, in for example Angela McRobbie's recent work, the opposition between a "bad" femininity and a "good" feminism simply gets recast as an opposition between a bad "old" femininity and a good "new" femininity. Instead, Hollows' project is to unpick and expose these implicit value judgements and the power relations that underpin them.

The book is divided into four sections. The first section provides an invaluable introduction to the key ideas of both second-wave feminism and feminist cultural studies which have informed feminist approaches to popular culture. The topics covered in the two central sections are much as might be expected although, unlike many other textbooks of its kind, *Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture* goes beyond the consideration of textual representations and textual analysis to a consideration of "lived experience", ethnographic and audience-based approaches. Consequently, the book is able to problematize the equation, apparent in many text-based approaches, of the "ordinary woman" with white, middle class

women and thus foreground the intersections between gender, class and, to a lesser extent, race and sexuality.

Section two thus explores studies of both texts and audiences in relation to various women's genres. The chapter on the woman's film, for example, moves from the sociological approaches of Rosen and Haskell, through the structuralist and psychoanalytical approaches of Johnston, Cook and Mulvey, to Doane and Williams' work on the female spectator and Stacey's work on female audiences, concluding with a section on cinema, race and sexuality. Subsequent chapters on romantic fiction and soap opera are equally meticulously researched and similarly comprehensive without being reductive.

Section three shifts the focus and explores consumption practices and cultural identities, with chapters on material culture, fashion and beauty practices, and youth cultures and popular music. The emphasis here is largely on tracing shifts in feminist approaches to popular cultural forms and practices. Chapter seven, for example, charts changing feminist attitudes to fashion, moving from feminism's critique of fashion as the site where normative femininities are constructed, through the identification of haute-couture and subcultural style as a form of resistance to traditional femininities, to a consideration of the way in which women use clothing in everyday contexts to construct and negotiate the meaning of femininity.

In the final section of the book, Hollows explores how feminism *itself* has been inscribed in popular culture. While the approaches outlined here act as a corrective to those which saw feminism as somehow existing outside the popular, there is, as Hollows observes, still an underlying "recruitment" in evidence here. It is not the "ordinary woman" that these perspectives wish to recruit and "make-over" in the feminist image, however, but popular culture itself. Yet, as Hollows has stressed throughout, both approaches merely reproduce "power relations between women in which the feminist is seen to have the experience and the authority to legislate on what is in 'women's interests'" (203). Consequently, she suggests instead that "analysing 'the popular' could teach feminists how to 'make-over' feminism" (203). Indeed, the inclusive address of popular feminist forms such as *Oprah* might have much to teach a feminism which, as Hollows has revealed, is often based on a problematic set of oppositions and exclusions.

If my description of the content of this book is a little schematic the fault is mine and not the author's. *Feminism, Femininity and Popular Culture* is much more than simply a textbook, it is also a long overdue reassessment of feminist cultural studies which goes beyond the simple mapping out of theoretical paradigms found in other textbooks of its kind. Indeed, the real skill of this book lies in the way in which it combines both a lucid and accessible outline of the key feminist approaches to popular culture (while, nevertheless, retaining a sense of their complexity) with an incisive and coherent thesis concerning the shifting relationship between feminism, femininity and popular culture. For this reason, it will prove invaluable not only to students of media and cultural studies but should find a place alongside the works of Brunsdon, McRobbie and Ang on the bookshelves of feminist researchers and academics.

Globalization and Culture

By John Tomlinson

Cambridge, Polity Press, 1999. ISBN, 0-7456-1338-1. 238 pp. £13.99 (pbk)

A review by Paul Grainge, University of Derby, UK

Globalization became one of the key debates of the 1990s, producing a voluminous body of criticism within, and between, the fields of sociology, economics, international relations, communications theory, cultural studies, as well as business studies. John Tomlinson negotiates this expansive critical terrain, introducing a set of conceptual and theoretical issues that bear less upon the structural economics of global modernity than upon its "lived experience" in cultural life. *Globalization and Culture* proceeds with the critical premise "that the huge transformative processes of our time that globalization describes cannot be properly understood until they are grasped through the conceptual vocabulary of culture." (1) Drawing upon theorists from Anthony Giddens to Stuart Hall, Tomlinson asks a series of provocative questions about the way that global relationships are felt in local contexts and alter the construction of meaning in everyday life.

While an introductory work, digesting contemporary debates and organizing thematic areas (including topics such as hybridity, deterritorialization, cosmopolitanism, and cultural imperialism), *Globalization and Culture* does have critical contentions of its own. Tomlinson develops a particular concept of globalization, defining it as a "complex connectivity." Referring to "the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependencies that characterize modern social life" (2), Tomlinson is concerned with the manner in which cultural relations and representations are effected by and, at the same time, help constitute, global connectivity. Globalization, he suggests, cannot be understood simply in terms of increased mobility around the world or through the development of electronic networks, but must be set in relation to a host of cultural practices that are embedded within the "mundane" experience of everyday life, from shopping at the supermarket to watching the evening news. At the centre of *Globalization and Culture* is a consideration of the immediate experience of deterritorialized identity, how "the impact of globalization is felt not in travel but in staying at home." (128)

There is much to like in Tomlinson's deft treatment of contemporary globalization debates. He provides a very measured account of dominant global theories, while crafting a position that neither lambastes nor glorifies the ambiguous, profoundly uneven, "cultural condition of globalization." Frederick Buell suggests that there are two main tendencies within globalization theory. One is to see globalization as a process of ever-deepening capitalist penetration, integration and hyperdevelopment, and the other concentrates more on the interactive and decentred nature of globalization and its impact and bearing on new imagined communities. Tomlinson is rightly sceptical of reductionist theories in either direction. While he accounts for the "dreams, nightmares and scepticism" (71) that have attached themselves to notions of global culture, he maintains a strong sense of complexity in his treatment of the globalization process. This said, *Globalization and Culture* ends with a chapter that identifies and examines the new "possibility of cosmopolitanism." In a historical moment where culture

has been increasingly dissolved from ideas of territorial place, Tomlinson attempts to map the significance and potentiality (as well as the pitfalls) of what he calls a "cosmopolitan disposition." While his argument is always keen to stress the mixed implications of the globalization process, there is at least something promissory in Tomlinson's suggestion that globalization might dispose us "towards an ongoing dialogue within both ourselves and with distanced cultural others." (195)

It is not simply the theoretical balance and clarity of writing that makes *Globalization and Culture* a worthy introductory text. It is also in the way that the book manages to anchor key issues such as deterritorialization in specific case examples and practical illustrations. For example, Tomlinson makes useful excursions into the production and distribution of global food and its consumption in local contexts; he examines the "mediated proximity" of television news; and he discusses locations and "non-places" of deterritorialization such as the airport lounge and the service station. If criticism can be made of *Globalization and Culture*, it is less in the organization or style of the book, than in Tomlinson's rather cursory treatment of postmodernist perspectives on globalization, notably the influential work of Arjun Appadurai and Fredric Jameson. His treatment of "global modernity and the distrust of universalism" (69) could, in particular, do with more serious engagement with postmodern theory, incorporating perspectives that might complicate his notion of good and bad universalisms. Overall, however, *Globalization and Culture* is a sophisticated, balanced, and highly readable book, further marking Tomlinson as a persuasive critical voice in the burgeoning globalization debate.

On the History of Film Style

By David Bordwell

Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997. ISBN 0-674-63429-2, x + 322 pp., illustrations, \$24.95 (pbk)

A review by Ronald W. Wilson, University of Kansas, USA

David Bordwell begins his detailed survey and analysis of film style historiography by citing the great philosopher and pundit, Yogi Berra, "You can observe a lot by watching." This incisive remark is extremely relevant to Bordwell's advocacy for a return to cinema aesthetics. Regardless of plot, genre, cultural or theoretical concerns, Bordwell asserts, "the texture of the film experience depends centrally upon the moving images and the sound that accompanies them. The audience gains access to story or theme only through that tissue of sensory materials." (7) Bordwell defines style as "a film's systematic and significant use of techniques of the medium." These include: mise en scene, framing, focus, control of color values, editing, and sound. It is, therefore, the specific elements of the film medium itself, and how these elements are utilized in combination to produce a film's style, that the author addresses in his book.

The primary focus of *On The History of Film Style* is an analysis of the ways both historians and theorists have interpreted important changes in film style. Bordwell states that the historians of film style posit two broad questions: 1) What patterns of stylistic continuity and change are significant? and 2) How may these patterns be explained? In answering these questions Bordwell categorizes three "research programs" which historians have developed in explaining the significance of changes in film style.

The Standard Version of stylistic history is characterized by a narrative mode emphasizing technological and artistic progress, canonicity, and the categorization of national "schools" such as German Expressionism, Soviet Formalism and French Impressionism. Proponents of the Standard Version included such film archivists as Henri Langlois of the Cinematheque Francaise and Iris Barry of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library (MOMA). Bordwell charges that Barry, especially, was highly selective of MOMA's acquisitions, thereby indirectly advocating a certain canonicity by the absence of films. "Well into the 1970s, American scholars' study of silent film history rested largely upon the Basic Story as recast by the MOMA film library." Two of the standard film history texts up to that time, Lewis Jacobs' *Rise of the American Film* (1939) and Arthur Knight's *The Liveliest Art* (1957), were both marked and limited by their reliance on the MOMA archives.

Another explanation for changes in film style was what Bordwell terms the "Dialectical Program." This line of inquiry (*la nouvelle critique*) was first addressed by Andre Bazin and his contemporaries in post-War Europe. In viewing Hollywood films which had not been available to them during the war, this new group of critics advanced three main ideas: the inherent realistic vocation of the film medium, cinema as a narrative or storytelling art that was closer to the novel and theater than to music or painting, and film as a popular art. In

stressing the realistic nature of film, *les nouvelles critiques* favored representational fidelity over the artistic possibilities of the medium. This led to the canonicity of such directors as Orson Welles, William Wyler, Howard Hawks and Jean Renoir. "By exploiting deep-focus imagery, long takes, and camera movement, these directors respect the spatial and temporal continuum of the everyday world--exactly the quality that motion picture photography is best equipped to capture." (71)

The innovation of early 1960s European cinema gave rise to what Bordwell categorizes as the "Oppositional Program." This "modernist" cinema, which was "comparable in experimental audacity to contemporary poetry and painting" (83), asserted itself with such directors as Alain Resnais, Jean-Luc Godard, Michelangelo Antonioni, Ingmar Bergman and Federico Fellini. The primary organizing principle in the Oppositional Version of the development of film style was the duality between avant garde and mainstream filmmaking. Collectively labeled "art cinema" many of these filmmakers sought a more personal and didactic approach to their craft. Bordwell spends a considerable portion of this chapter discussing the film theory of Noel Burch whom he considers most representative of the Oppositional Program.

The last half of the book is devoted to a discussion of revisionist versions of the development of film style, as well as Bordwell's own analysis of depth staging as a problem/solution model of the history of a particular film style. As an advocate of the problem/solution approach Bordwell stresses the advantage of using such a model for further research programs. "It allows us to focus on particular aspects of film style--certain problems rather than all of them--while still acknowledging that patterns of problems and solution can intersect with one another or with other factors (technological, economic, or cultural)." (150) Of paramount importance to such an approach are the problems a filmmaker encounters in attempting to tell a story and the solutions that are chosen. Bordwell's discussion of staging in depth, for instance, analyzes the problems encountered with widescreen technology in the mid-1950s and how filmmakers resolved them.

On The History of Film Style is an important addition to the growing body of scholarly work in film historiography. Bordwell's analysis is perceptive and lucid in its discussion of how historians and theorists have sought to explain the changes in film style in the relatively short history of the cinema. It is to the text's advantage that Bordwell utilizes an abundance of frame enlargements to illustrate his major points. Above all the book justifies a return to film studies as a humanistic discipline worthy of scholarly pursuit and a continuation for further research programs to be developed through investigative inquiry.

Out Takes: Essays on Queer Theory and Film

By Ellis Hanson (ed.)

Durham NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1999. ISBN 0-8223-2342-7. 400pp. 55 photographs. £13.50 (pbk)

A review by Mark Brownrigg, University of Stirling, Scotland, UK

Since the early 1980s, queer theory has presented an intriguing mixture of the personal and the political. In a decade when AIDS was cutting a swathe through the metropolitan centres of the Western World, sex and sedition became intimately linked: the body politic became the body political. Early queer theorists analysed cultural texts with the revolutionary zeal of a newfound self-confidence. Old movies were re-read in transgressive ways; new films were picked apart, rated and slated according to a prescriptive raft of wide-ranging criteria. At its height, the militant gay movement in America picketed screenings of *The Silence of the Lambs* and *Basic Instinct* and was a media-literate voice to be reckoned with.

Now, as the 1990s draw to a close, Ellis Hanson and his fellow contributors choose to cast a critical eye over not just the moving image, but over the ways that queer theory has chosen to deal with it over the past two decades. Queer theory is perceived as having adopted a tripartite approach to cultural criticism. Firstly, it presents a "moralist" politics of representation that seeks to liberate lesbians, gays and bisexuals from negative stereotypes. Secondly, it can provide a descriptive, commonly Marxist, style of cultural politics that seeks to define the meanings of a text "through a surprisingly uncritical process of 'contextualisation'" (5). Finally, a psychoanalytic approach can be adopted, "usually in the rather dated and mechanical theoretical framework established by Freud and his more recent adherents" (5).

Hanson hopes that he is not merely adding to a field of criticism that decides which movies are "good" for gays and which movies are "bad". Persuasively, he asserts that "[t]he lesbian and gay seal of approval is often stamped on films that are politically acceptable, but visually and sexually illiterate" (2). In other words, a display of good politics doesn't necessarily guarantee a good movie. For Hanson, queer theorists and filmmakers have argued themselves into a mundane corner of politically correct self-expression, denying themselves a more dangerous and questionable imaging of love and desire. "If queer theory has anything to offer... it is the rigorous questioning of the very concepts of correctness, identity, stereotyping, visibility and authenticity" (12). Hanson reads such movie *bêtes noires* as *Cruising* and *The Killing of Sister George* as fascinating, entertaining, daring and challenging: "in a word, queer" (11).

This, of course, flies in the face of post-Vito Russo/*The Celluloid Closet* orthodoxy. Hanson wants movies that challenge his mind, delight his eye and "complicate [his] understanding of sexuality" (11).

After his engaging and provocative introduction, the anthology is split into three parts, all comprising new essays: the first "Rethinking Masculinity in Classic Cinema"; the second examining lesbian "Desire, Identification, Fantasy"; and the third covering "Sexual Politics and Independent Cinema". In part one, Steven Cohan re-views Hope and Crosby's *Road To...* movies, Alexander Doty examines *The Red Shoes*, and Lee Edelman reconsiders *Rear Window*. D.A. Miller winds up the section with a look at "Visual Pleasure in 1959" focusing on *Suddenly, Last Summer*. In part two, Bonnie Burns places the cinematic "look" once more under the microscope, Eric Savoy deconstructs Doris Day, Hanson himself surveys lesbian vampire movies and Michelle Elleray considers *Heavenly Creatures*. Finally, Jean Walton looks at the 1930s underground film *Borderline*, Matthew Tinkcom contextualises Kenneth Anger and his Hollywood, Jim Ellis offers an excellent essay on Derek Jarman, and Amy Villarejo winds up the volume with a look at lesbian pulp fiction.

The whole is well designed, readable and illustrated with frame enlargements. The contributions retain the best aspects of queer theory's appealing revision of the past, revealing examination of the present and weather eye on the future. The volume is also welcome in that it is not purely located in the labyrinthine psychoanalytic underworld where much similar work tends to be found, and many of the contributions retain the sense of humour that is happily part of much of queer theory's style.

A major cinematic problem faced by the lesbian, gay and bisexual community to date has been the paucity of product. When only a handful of films appear in the year attempting to chart gay life experience, it is inevitable that they run into trouble with the audience they are aimed at. No one movie can possibly hope to say everything that we want to be said about our lives, our experiences and our sexuality. It is unfair to expect them to. In addition, it is now perhaps time to move on from the old gay politics of representation and the discussion of stereotypes both positive and negative. This process was a necessary and understandable one of self-affirmation and political rigor, but, as Hanson suggests, cinema is about more than real lives; it's about imagination, transgression and the unfathomability of desire. "Does the reality of gay people's lives necessarily make for good cinema? If someone made a movie about *my* life, I doubt I would go to see it" (8).

Star Trek: Parallel Narratives

By Chris Gregory

London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000, ISBN: 0-333-74489-6, 225 pp., £12.99 (pbk)

Deep Space and Sacred Time: Star Trek in the American Mythos By Jon Wagner and Jan Lundeen & Star Trek and Sacred Ground: Explorations of Star Trek, Religion and American Culture Edited by Jennifer E. Porter and Darcee L. McLaren & Star Trek and History: Racing Toward a White Future By Daniel Leonard Bernardi & Race in Space: The Representation of Ethnicity in Star Trek and Star Trek: The Next Generation By Micheal C. Pounds

Deep Space and Sacred Time: Star Trek in the American Mythos

By Jon Wagner and Jan Lundeen

Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1998, ISBN: 0-275-96225-3, xiii + 265 pp., £22.50 (hbk)

Star Trek and Sacred Ground: Explorations of Star Trek, Religion and American Culture

Edited by Jennifer E. Porter and Darcee L. McLaren

Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, ISBN: 0-7914-4334-5, xii + 315 pp., \$62.50 (hbk), \$20.95 (pbk)

Star Trek and History: Race-ing Toward a White Future

By Daniel Leonard Bernardi

New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press, 1998, ISBN: 0-8135-2466-0, 247 pp., £13.50 (pbk)

Race in Space: The Representation of Ethnicity in Star Trek and Star Trek: The Next Generation

By Micheal C. Pounds

Maryland and London: Scarecrow Press, 1999, ISBN: 0-8108-3322-0, xi + 252 pp., £30.90 (hbk)

A review by Matthew Hills, Cardiff University, Wales, UK

Star Trek continues to fascinate and intrigue academics, providing the material for an ongoing mission, albeit one of textual exegesis. The past few years have seen a burst of publishing activity as the texts of the *ST* universe have been subjected to many and varied forms of analysis. While it might be tempting to apply the Vulcan doctrine of "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations" to describe this profusion of film, media and cultural studies work, such a characterisation is hardly borne out. Instead, work has tended to fall into a limited number of camps; either *Star Trek* is discussed in relation to "mythic" themes and issues, or representations of ethnicity in *Star Trek* are finally foregrounded. Although this latter move is both appropriate and necessary, it seems rather belated, almost as if such crucial issues of restrictive and restricted meaning-making (long discussed in fan circles) can only feature as an afterthought here. Once an active *ST* fan audience has been established, and the show's proto-feminist "poachers" have been applauded, then, and only then, does race seemingly emerge as a topic of discussion and debate.

Of the five books under review, it is Chris Gregory's *Parallel Narratives* that most immediately signals both its strengths and its weaknesses. Gregory's strength is that his approach attempts breadth of coverage, dealing with all the different incarnations of *Trek*, its political and social themes, and its "cult" following. However, Gregory's strength is also his undoing; by moving rapidly across such a vast range of texts he tends to present very brief summaries of, and commentaries on, specific episodes. Furthermore, although it could be argued that few academics would still be so attentively analysing the narrative worlds of *Star Trek* were it not for its vocal and knowledgeable fan following (often composed of some of those very same academics), Gregory's discussion of "cult" fan audiences does not reflect this centrality of fandom. Fandom is a footnote to his survey of the *Star Trek* universe, as it is in the other offerings examined here, with the exceptions of *Star Trek and History* and *Star Trek and Sacred Ground*. And yet this fandom, and the wider cultural perception of the "Trekker", may well underpin not only this academic interest in *Trek*, but also the viability of publishing such a number of overlapping books. There seems to be little reflection on the cultural context in which these books have been commissioned and in which they will circulate and have meaning. "Cultural contexts" apparently belong within the analysis of *Trek's* film and television texts but have no place in relation to the production and publication of academic writing on *Star Trek*.

Gregory's book takes its title from his sense that *Star Trek* has become an increasingly sophisticated narrative world, increasingly capable of achieving a relativistic decentring of "the (diegetically) real" through its science-fictional devices of parallel dimensions and co-existing alternative universes. Gregory's exploration of this narrative decentring is intriguing and worthwhile, and he suggests that:

The evolution of *Star Trek* in the 1980s and 1990s into such a multi-layered and self-referential "web" of narratives is a measure of the differences in popular culture between recent decades and what now appears to be the comparatively "primitive" or "innocent" era of the 1960s... Space and time in *Star Trek* stretch in infinite directions and "reality" can be reconfigured in any number of ways. This mirrors the way in which the present media environment has broken up the immediacy of the TV medium. (21-22)

Linking narrative structure into issues of both technological context, audience reception and "televisuality" (Caldwell), Gregory provides a way into the self-referential density of *Trek's* parallel dimensions. This exploration is, unfortunately, marked by certain assumptions, not least regarding the "primitive" or "innocent" nature of 1960s television. Primitive for whom? In relation to what? And why "primitive"? Although Gregory rightly protects himself with scare quotes on this occasion, his assumptions are condensed into one key term that is not placed in inverted commas: evolution. For Gregory, the texts of *Star Trek* "evolve". They "evolve" from the simplistic limits of the episodic series. They "evolve" from linear cause and effect to a diegetic intertwining of alternative causes and alternative effects. It is striking that what has been perceived by fans and academics as one of the primary differences of *Trek* (its humanistic belief in all manners of evolution) somehow migrates from the text under analysis to become one of the linchpins of Gregory's exegesis. The concept of progress, teleological to the end, thus moves from text to analysis. Yet Gregory's own conclusion - coming some five pages later than the quote given above - is that the original series was marked from at least its fourth and fifth episodes (*The Naked Time* and *Enemy Within*) by "psychological disruptions" and by decentrings of stable characterisation. Why should these "parallel narratives" be assumed to be more simplistic than later parallel universe scenarios? Simply by dint of their narrative closure? But then this relies on a model of ideological closure which has long been challenged within Screen theory and its successors. It fails to consider the energies and affectivities released within the process of narrative, relying instead on the securities of narrative resolution and closure. Is *The Naked Time* more "simplistic" than the *ST:NG* episode *The Naked Now* simply because the latter refers back to the former? What makes self-referentiality more "sophisticated" rather than it being "derivative", "unoriginal" or "secondary"? Gregory's desire to celebrate later *Trek* at the expense of earlier series is nowhere clearer than in his suggestion that "*Deep Space Nine* stands as *Star Trek's* major dramatic achievement... a series which... grasps the 'epic' form in a way unparalleled in TV history" (88). For a writer so concerned with diegetic or intra-textual parallels and their destabilisation of the unitary self, Gregory displays scant concern for the industrial, generic and inter-textual parallels which might destabilise the claims for *DS9's* "unparalleled" stature. Fans of *Babylon 5*, to take one example, may wish to disagree with Gregory's representation of *DS9* here.

The final episode investigated in *Parallel Narratives* is, fittingly enough, the first referred to in Jon Wagner and Jan Lundeen's *Deep Space and Sacred Time*. The *ST:TNG* episode *Darmok* fascinates all of these writers because of the way that it depicts a society which uses mythic archetypes to communicate. This shared concluding/introductory selection illustrates the difficulties which are presented by a "text" as vast as *Star Trek*. A "representative" or "symptomatic" episode is sought by Gregory, and by Wagner and Lundeen, in order to bring the theme of the *ST* mythos into focus. And yet this selection - in which academic subject matter is validated by recourse to a specific episode - highlights the extent to which theoretical engagements tend to prioritise their own "canon" (see, for example, the same phenomenon with regard to *The X-Files*, where Jose Chung's "*From Outer Space*" has sparked off and supported work on postmodernism and intertextuality at the expense of examining some of the infinitely more earnest "conspiracy" episodes).

Deep Space and Sacred Time attempts to steer a middle course between the veneration and the interrogation of myth. Despite this apparent pluralism, the writers' sympathies are not difficult to discern. They often return to the pronouncements of Joseph Campbell (a position they share with Chris Gregory) but make relatively little of the Barthesian notion of myth.

Darcee McLaren's observation in chapter 12 of *Star Trek and Sacred Ground* seems relevant here. McLaren usefully comments that:

"*Star Trek* is a modern myth" is an often-heard phrase that resonates with, and is used by, scholars and fans alike. Within fandom the phrase justifies loyalty and enthusiasm... Scholars use the phrase as an explanation... However, very little attention has been given to the referential meaning of the phrase. (231)

McLaren's point that "myth" has a discursive value within the contexts of both fandom and academia is something that calls for further examination. How might descriptions of "myth" (and for that matter, ascriptions of "authorship") work not as blanket forms of cultural evaluation and valorisation, but rather as mobile discourses occupying different regimes of value for producers, audiences and critics, while seemingly binding these cultural groups together?

By claiming a synthetic middle ground which heals the thesis and antithesis of Barthes and Campbell (cultural theory and transhistorical or Jungian-influenced theory), Wagner and Lundeen do not fully examine the contradictory epistemologies of these schools of thought. They do not sufficiently investigate the "referential meaning of the phrase" "myth", proceeding instead as if different theoretical approaches - based around different foundational assumptions - could somehow be aggregated or averaged-out so as to please everyone. This rhetoric of common-sense progress and of pluralism is, I would suggest, another trope which binds Wagner and Lundeen to the texts of *Star Trek*. Where Gregory draws on the structure of evolution (which is assumed to be directional - an assumption which Wagner and Lundeen are quick to reject, see page 152), Wagner and Lundeen draw on common sense rhetorics of literary value, of cultural hierarchies, and of pluralism as a humanistic goal.

Deep Space and *Sacred Time's* attempt at "reclaiming humanism" (the subtitle and the project of chapter eleven) seems to place Wagner and Lundeen in a highly conservative light. Their attempts at pluralist inclusiveness often run uneasily alongside discussions of whether or not *Trek* is racist - they find the show "not guilty" on the basis that racism is not clearly or adequately defined by its critics. It is curious how, in Wagner and Lundeen's hands, discussions of homoeroticism and of racial representation crumble into insignificant dust on the basis of their allegedly unstable signifiers. Cultural critics are derided for finding homoeroticism everywhere in the sacred texts of *Star Trek*, and for doing so without a clear definition of what "homoeroticism" actually is: "it is reasonable to question the usefulness of terms like 'homoerotic' and 'homophobic' when they are applied so loosely that one can see homoeroticism in a fistfight" (107).

"Reasonable" to whom? Whose anxiety is it which calls for an arm-wrestle over the definition of these terms? And why is it the case that both homoeroticism and matters of race are so rapidly dispatched to the great definitional disintegrator in the sky? "Myth" not only bears up rather well, it is also protected from critique via the notion that "to critique mythic mediations as though they were philosophical arguments is, as Marilynne Robinson put it, to 'grumble about the apple and the snake'" (215). To this reader at least, it is unclear on what basis "myth" should be protected from the corrosiveness of rational debate while discussions of homophobia and racial representation can "reasonably" be side-stepped. The tenets of humanism and pluralism are clear enough: "the insights of a true literary classic [Picard's allusions to *Moby Dick* in *First Contact*] can... stand above the vicissitudes of time and

culture as a beacon to illuminate the human condition." (210) One universe, one value, one story... One vision. Pluralism is a strange new world where *Moby Dick* rules forever.

The role and scope of something called "rationality" is also the subject of discussion in the edited collection *Star Trek and Sacred Ground*. There is again a favoured episode which encapsulates the concerns and interests of scholars dealing with myth and religion: *Who Mourns for Adonais?* Having provided the title and content of chapter 2 of Wagner and Lundeen's study, this also forms the basis for a study of *ST:TOS* and religion by Robert Asa in the Porter and McLaren collection. While both discussions refer to Kirk's comment that "we find the one [God] quite adequate", neither places this one-liner within the context of TV as an industrial production. Wagner and Lundeen use it to contest the characterisation of *ST:TOS* as wholly anti-religious, while Asa suggests, on the contrary, that despite this remark "in the twenty third century the God of traditional Western theism is dead" (45). Such discussions seem intent on divulging the "values" of *Star Trek* as a text, if not on treating the diegesis as if it were real, ie. "in the twenty third century..." By discussing the text as a self-contained unit (albeit one framed within a cultural context) these approaches seem to (more-or-less) reify the text, divorcing it from the detailed mechanisms and discourses of television production. For example, it could be suggested that given the extremely obvious humanistic and anti-religion message of *Who Mourns for Adonais?*, Kirk's one-liner is actually a sop to "public opinion" as constructed by the network. When the greatest fear is one of offending an audience, and of losing audience share through the representation of unpalatable ideas (be these interracial relationships or a stridently God-less universe) then contradictions and cryptic allusions to an un-named but singular "one" God are perhaps one route towards hegemonic recuperation. To take such comments as a basis for textual exegesis seems to miss the point slightly.

Star Trek and Sacred Ground recounts a different narrative of progression to that presented by Gregory, and Wagner and Lundeen. In this instance, the emphasis is on a developing tolerance of religious world-views within the *Trek* franchise. The Enlightenment view of rationality triumphing over superstitious claptrap (Asa, 48) which is said to characterise *ST:TOS* is juxtaposed with the representation of Klingon culture in *ST:TNG*, the emphasis on Bajoran spirituality in *DS9* and the treatment of Native American-inspired New Age themes in *Voyager*. However, where this collection of essays scores valuable points is in its rejection of an absolutely clear movement from anti-religion *Trek* to pro-religion *Trek*. Asa notes that the original series, although seeming to correspond to the "Enlightenment" and "humanist" labels which have circulated around it extratextually, enacts a more complex scenario:

Star Trek's non-theistic cosmology seems more a psychological matter of negative fusion than an ontological matter of considered worldview. Negative fusion is emotional bondage to that which one consciously repudiates. The negatively fused person is still controlled by that which he or she rejects, only in reverse, rebelliously reacting against belief and finding identity in anti-belief. The repetitive way in which Classic *Star Trek* can't seem to leave religion alone suggests that it is bedeviled by the divine. (51)

This "bedevilment" is also captured in Gregory Peterson's discussion of *ST:TNG*, which focuses on the way that science and its promises of progress present an "evolutionary eschatology" (72-3). In Peterson's thoughtful and detailed analysis religion and science are not merely opponents; science has the potential, narratologically speaking, to become a form

of religion itself. Deliverance is offered by the sacred texts of *Trek*, but it is not the utopia of an after life; it is the utopia of the after lives of future generations.

A number of essays in *Star Trek and Sacred Ground* (Kreitzer and Lamp) seek to link imagery from *Star Trek* to Biblical interpretations. This raises interesting questions of which intertexts can and should form the basis for academic readings: why is linking *Trek* to the Bible any more or less valid than linking it to the work of Joseph Campbell or the theories of Antonio Gramsci? As well as a solid overview by Anne Mackenzie Pearson, and the detailed textual analyses of the likes of Asa and Peterson, *Star Trek and Sacred Ground* further distinguishes itself as a rich resource through its section on fandom. This includes work by Michael Jindra - which builds on his prior piece on *Trek* fandom contained in the journal *Sociology of Religion* - as well as closing chapters written by the book's co-editors. These final chapters deal with the vexed issue of myth and examine fans' convention-going as a form of pilgrimage. The final chapter by Jennifer Porter includes one of the best analyses of fan discourse - its negotiations and unspoken implications - that I have come across. Porter tends to emphasise the communitas-building discourses of fandom at the expense of examining disruptions to this "liminal" frame. She thereby takes fans' accounts of the egalitarian nature of fandom at face value (258) rather than subjecting these claims to the same detailed analysis which she affords one group exchange (261-267). Nevertheless Porter's work here on negotiative fan discourse is exemplary in many ways, particularly given its attention to the small words and the local worlds of fandom.

Daniel Bernardi's *Star Trek and History: Race-ing Toward a White Future* is one of two books recently published which present a serious consideration of the representation of race in *Star Trek* (Pounds 1999 being the other). Like the Porter and McLaren edited collection, Bernardi does not carry out textual analysis in a space wholly divorced from fan reading(s) since his final substantive chapter deals with fan readings on the *Star Trek* listserver STREK-L. Unlike Gregory, Bernardi carries out more detailed analyses of specific texts, and he also does so by referring to the televisual and filmic framing of shots. Pages 65-67 carry out a conventional application of Laura Mulvey's work, albeit in relation to TV. Pages 71 to 75, however, are rather more playful in their applications of Mulveyesque thinking. Referring to *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, Bernardi discusses how a "full frontal" view of USS Enterprise takes up the position of "to-be-looked-at-ness", a reading which hinges on the feminisation of the spacecraft as it is discussed by Scotty and Kirk. It would be all too easy to mock Bernardi's reading here, and to ponder the parodic value of his discussion of "white starships". Wagner and Lundeen would, I very much suspect, be having none of this. However, the sheer cheek and humour of Bernardi's approach while raising interesting issues at one and the same time should be applauded rather than denigrated. Although it is not always clear what Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope adds to Bernardi's analysis, his consideration of racial representations is both timely and complex without falling into a dull nebula of moral hectoring.

I asked a little earlier how various intertexts should be considered in academic analyses of *Trek*. One of the projects established by Bernardi is to examine the various intertexts which have been taken up by *Star Trek* over its history and to consider these in relation to fans' (more or less hegemonic) reading positions. Of course, the academic reading position adopted by Bernardi is not similarly explored for hints and moments of hegemonic complicity. Bernardi's favoured academic intertexts are, of course, clearly introduced and set up in the book's first chapter. But he is careful not to claim that his readings are definitive, "ideal" or "true":

these readings are not "ideal" (or even the best out there). I am no more right than anyone else. As the uncertainty principle of quantum physics ultimately suggests, my histories inform the universe I seek to measure. Nevertheless, like Gene Roddenberry and the fans, I hope that my readings are at least insightful. (182)

Once again, there is more than a whiff of heroic pluralism about all this. While hardly exhibiting the rampant humanism of Wagner and Lundeen, nor indeed the faith in televisual evolution demonstrated by Gregory, Bernardi goes a step further and presents a narrative of progress which centres reflexively (although within specific limits) on the status of his own readings. The IDIC ethic is (partially) relocated not in relation to fan readings (Bernardi demonstrates that these are often permeated by hegemonic accounts of race despite their professed radicalism), but in relation to all readings (academic/production/fan). Bernardi's faith in the *Star Trek* universe seems such that he transfers its "ethos" not merely to textual (diegetic) or televisual analysis, but to the relativisation of reading positions. Bernardi's "parallel narratives" are not those of different *Star Trek* series or of the different dimensions presented in specific episodes; these parallel narratives are *parallel academic narratives* circulating in competition with fan folklore and production rhetoric. Such narratives can apparently hope for no legitimation beyond that of being "insightful". And yet Bernardi's pluralism of reading positions seems to neglect its own intersection with power relations; does his reading have the same status as one offered by Roddenberry? How might Bernardi's readings be institutionally legitimated, or legitimated through publication, or through discourses of framing and interpretation (in relation to the fan readings taken from STREK-L)? Does "anything go" in this Heisenberg whirl of reading positions? Most intriguingly, why the recourse to techno-babble at this point? Bernardi's final justification, invoking quantum physics, sounds more than a little like the creaking exposition which transports *Star Trek's* narratives from one magical resolution to another. This particular narrative of academic progress resorts to scientific legitimation in the absence of any other determining intertextual frame, continuing to play with(in) the parameters of *Trek's* faith in "evolutionary eschatology".

Race in Space by Micheal C. Pounds is a worthwhile addition to the type of work being done by Gregory, Wagner and Lundeen, Porter and McLaren *et al*, and Bernardi, since Pounds's discussion of *Trek* and ethnicity does not focus as strongly on "the text". Instead it contextualises its textual analysis (of specific case studies rather than adopting the all-inclusive approach used by Gregory) within a detailed concern with the television industry. While both Bernardi and Gregory have some interest in this topic, neither develops it as much as Pounds. In fact it is not until page 113 (of 198 pages of main text) that Pounds gets on with his textual analysis. This is preceded by a fascinating historical account of race relations within TV production and a series of chapters dealing with the industrial context of the original *Star Trek* and the launching of *ST:TNG* (Pounds restricts his study to these two series). Pounds also makes good use of publicity stills for *ST:TOS* and *ST:TNG*. Whereas Bernardi reproduces publicity stills of individual characters from *Voyager* more-or-less without comment (pages 4-7 of *Star Trek and History*), Pounds subjects the publicity representations of the crews of *TOS* and *TNG* to a useful and detailed reading.

All the titles under review here offer interesting material on the *Star Trek* phenomenon. The market for academic studies of *Trek* may now be temporarily glutted, but it is unlikely to be sated. There are at least three good reasons for this. One is that despite remedying the relative absence of work on *Star Trek* and race and religion, by and large these titles (excepting

Pounds) do not engage with issues of industrial history. Another is that by endeavouring to cover a wide range of themes, some of these titles sacrifice depth of analysis in favour of sheer coverage. A third reason for supposing that the academic *Trek* industry will roll onwards is that so few of these texts reflect on their own social and cultural contexts, and on their own production and marketing to fans as well as to academics. This absence means that it remains for future work to reflect more adequately on the conditions of possibility of parallel academic narratives, not only in terms of different theoretical frameworks but also in terms of the cultural materialism of *Star Trek*. Without such reflection it will remain all too easy to construct a separation of *Trek* fans and *Trek* academics. Academia will thus remain outside its object of study rather than being fully implicated (*whether or not any specific writer is a self-described "fan"*) in the cult formations and cultural circulations of *Star Trek*. This, then, would be my own (perhaps idiosyncratic) fantasy of academic progression translated from *Star Trek's* fantasies of evolution.

Boldly going where others have gone before is not such a bad idea, but perhaps we need to consider why it is that writers return to specific texts, and how this revisionist circling around (perhaps more of a hermeneutic spiral than a linear "evolution" or progression) relates to the cultural contexts in which "we" as academics write about and study popular culture. The "sacred texts" of *Star Trek* need to be explored, via a form of affective reflexivity, both in relation to their textual form *and* their felt or experienced sacredness and cultural value. To do either one without the other strikes me as an academic response mired in its own oppositions between ("Enlightenment") rationality and ("postmodern") romanticisation.

Storytelling in the New Hollywood: Understanding Classical Narrative Technique

By Kristin Thompson

Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999. ISBN: 0-674-83974-9 (hard) 0-674-83974-7 (soft), xi + 398 pp., 40 illustrations. £30.95 (hbk); £15.50 (pbk)

A review by Steve Neale, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

The central aim of this book is to demonstrate that the New Hollywood -- the Hollywood of the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s -- still produces "classical" narrative films, films which adhere, for the most part, to the precepts that have governed Hollywood feature films since the late 1910s. These precepts will be familiar to readers of Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson's earlier book, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*. They include goal-oriented protagonists, double plot-lines, dangling causes, coherent chains of cause and effect, consistent and multiple motivation, unambiguous closure, clarity and comprehensibility, and the use of stylistic devices to achieve or intensify these ends.

In pursuit of her argument, Thompson looks in detail at ten New Hollywood films, grouped according to whether they have single protagonists (*Tootsie*, *Back to the Future* and *Groundhog Day*), parallel protagonists (*Desperately Seeking Susan*, *Amadeus* and *The Hunt for Red October*), or multiple protagonists (*Alien* and *Hannah and Her Sisters*). She also comments at length on issues of structure. Here her central point is that Hollywood films (Old and New) are usually divisible into four large-scale parts of roughly equal length (not three, as is often specified in screenwriting manuals). These parts she labels "the setup", "the complicating action", "the development" and "the climax". They are articulated by what she calls "turning points", and these are linked to major formulations, reformulations, developments or blocks in, of and to protagonists' goals.

Although it will doubtless be attacked for its "formalism", Thompson's book is a valuable contribution to the growing body of work on New Hollywood cinema, not least because she takes issue with a number of its tenets. She demonstrates convincingly that New Hollywood films are organised and structured along traditional narrative lines, that they are not fragmented or unconnected chunks of spectacular action and special effects. (As she points out, fragmented or incoherent films would hardly have the global appeal many New Hollywood films clearly possess). She also points out that action-oriented blockbusters (to which ascriptions of fragmentation and incoherence are usually applied) are by no means the only films the New Hollywood produces. And she takes issue, too, with the way the term "high concept" has been used to differentiate New from Old Hollywood cinema.

Differences between Old and New Hollywood films *are* acknowledged. Thompson notes that the bursts of action that mark some recent blockbusters are so frequent that they leave little time or space for the development of characters, subplots or motifs. She also notes a tendency

to curtail or compress exposition. And she points to a number of stylistic changes as well: "No doubt the music-video aesthetic, with its fast cutting and occasional jump cuts, has influenced modern films. Lighting and tonality tend to be darker, even outside the realms of the film noir. Dissolves to soften scene transitions have all but disappeared, and fades are used only to mark the few most important scene changes. Startling sound bridges have become common. Dazzling developments in special-effects have made flashy style much more prominent, especially in science-fiction and action films." (18-19).

For Thompson these differences are minor, incidental, and in this she is probably correct. However for some these differences are crucial: they are the hallmarks of all that has changed in Hollywood films since the studio era. (It is worth remembering that many of the schools and strands in Film Studies -- notably auteurism and the analysis of visual style and mise-en-scene -- are founded on the perception of apparently minor and incidental details). At the same time, the downplaying of difference raises issues of periodisation: if nearly all Hollywood films since the late 1910s are "classical", how are the shifts and changes in Hollywood's history to be charted? What is new about New Hollywood cinema? Precisely how valid or how useful is this term? These questions are made the more pertinent by Thompson's insistence on the similarities, rather than the differences, in the film production process since the studio era, and on other similarities too. Thompson herself is not centrally concerned with these questions. But her book raises them in ways which demand that they be answered with argument and evidence rather than assertion. The same applies to her points about narrative. It is up to those who have different views about New Hollywood films to rebut her arguments with detailed examples rather than rely on journalistic soundbites or on vague evocations of "postmodernism", as has tended to be the case with most of the writing on the aesthetics of New Hollywood cinema to date.

Visions of Virtue in Popular Film

By Joseph H. Kupfer

Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999 ISBN 0813367212 x + 236pp

A review by Kirsty Fairclough, University of Salford, UK

Visions of Virtue is on first glance, a rather abstruse attempt to apply philosophy and virtue theory to mainstream Hollywood film. Yet on further reflection, this is a welcome break from the norm, and an extremely enjoyable read.

Joseph Kupfer offers a detailed and in-depth insight to a little studied area. He undertakes an exploration of the virtues and vices within films such as *The African Queen*, *Groundhog Day*, *Jaws*, *Aliens* and *Rob Roy*.

The book begins with a lengthy description of the assumptions he brings to cinema and the view of virtue with which he aims to assess a range of films. Kupfer acknowledges that each of the philosophical areas warrants a book in their own right, but nevertheless offers an interesting introduction to various philosophical underpinnings. He offers a fascinating perspective on virtue theory and clearly explains the approach to the preferred selection.

The chosen films are all products of Hollywood and are embedded in Western traditions of virtue, which originates from the work of Aristotle. A detailed explanation is provided for those unfamiliar with certain philosophical perspectives. Here Kupfer acknowledges "The conception of virtue with which I work, therefore, should be understood as situated within a tradition which always sets itself in a relationship of dialogue with Aristotle." (33) This book reinterprets the Aristotelian point of view in the light of popular American cinema.

The first section of the book is concerned with an analysis of *Groundhog Day*, *The African Queen*, and *Parenthood*, where the protagonists undergo radical change and learn moral lessons, thus becoming more virtuous.

Kupfer's analysis of *Groundhog Day* is particularly fascinating. He links the character of Phil Connors (Bill Murray) with the idea that living virtuously offers the right way to live and explains the dramatisation of Nietzsche's concept of the eternal return within the film. This is a remarkable analysis, which is filled with an unpretentious clarity when describing the self-defeating nature of a life filled with egotistic hedonism, the kind that Phil Connors displays in *Groundhog Day*.

Visions of Virtue continues to investigate *The African Queen* and analyses its depiction of a loving relationship as the force for the development of virtue in both characters, Rose Sayer (Katherine Hepburn) and Charlie Allnut (Humphrey Bogart).

The following chapter, *The Virtues of Parenthood* offers an analysis of Ron Howard's 1989 film and examines the often difficult relationship between parents and children. Kupfer

examines how raising children affects the virtues and vices of both parents and children and considers how each parent and their children exhibits a particular virtue or vice.

In the second group of films: *Rob Roy*, *Fresh*, *Jaws* and *Aliens*, the central characters must respond to the state of their surroundings, whether it be the political economy of the state, or the street gangs in the city. These characters do not undergo any virtuous change; their moral characters are allowed to flourish under the pressure from outside of themselves.

Language, Community and Evil in *Rob Roy* examines Michael Caton Jones's 1995 film where virtue and vice is played out in the context of a wider community. Robert Roy MacGregor (Liam Neeson) does not need to develop his virtuous character, he already possesses virtues in abundance. The emphasis here is on language use or linguistic virtue where the ability to sustain a moral community is dependent on the regulation of moral norms relating to speech. This is the least engaging analysis in the collection, but nevertheless offers an interesting perspective.

Fresh Phronesis articulates the development of the most elusive and difficult virtue, phronesis or practical wisdom, in Boaz Yakin's 1994 film *Fresh*. This analysis explores how *Fresh* exemplifies the necessity for a certain degree of knowledge of human nature in order to develop particular virtues such as phronesis. The central character, Michael (Sean Nelson), a prepubescent boy who finds his way through the social minefields of his community with astounding wisdom, conflicts with Aristotle's idea of phronesis. In this chapter Kupfer offers an engaging examination of a particularly touching film.

The final chapter compares Steven Spielberg's 1975 blockbuster, *Jaws* and John Cameron's 1986 film *Aliens*. Both Chief Brody (Roy Scheider) and Flight Officer Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) are faced with monsters and their subsequent attack upon humans both physically and mentally. Kupfer considers how the completeness of virtue in both characters enables them to overcome the threat of the monster where experts fall short.

There are a diverse range of films here, which collectively offer an engaging and timely exploration of the facets of the human character seen in popular Hollywood cinema. It is fascinating to read about Aristotle's vision of virtue and then to see it exemplified in a range of Hollywood films.

This is an interesting, if somewhat overlong look into the world of philosophy and film. This book is not for those new to the study of film as Kupfer assumes that his readers have a solid knowledge of cinema. Overall, this is a scholarly, engaging and refreshing read.

The World According to Hollywood 1918-1939

By Ruth Vasey

Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1997. ISBN: 0 85989 553 X (hbk) and 085989 554 8 (pbk). xiii+299pp. £40.00 (hbk) £14.99 (pbk)

A review by Nadine Wills, Griffith University, Australia

Ruth Vasey proposes that Hollywood's narrow range of representations in the 1930s was the direct result of global pressure in *The World According to Hollywood 1918-1939*. Vasey succeeds with a well-researched first book that won the 1997 Krasna-Krauz Moving Image Award for Culture and History. Between World War I and World War II, Vasey argues, Hollywood films became much more "open texts" that depended on ambiguity. However, Vasey does not only locate this change in the creation of the Production Code Administration (PCA) and increased domestic lobbying. Vasey focuses on the ways in which overseas markets helped to institutionalise ambiguity in Hollywood film representation as well. After the introduction of sound, hidden visual conventions and metaphors came to communicate forbidden topics to increasingly "sophisticated subjects". In effect, Vasey argues that centralised regulation trained audiences to look for the "dirty little secrets" of forbidden subject matter that had been negotiated internationally. Vasey details the "comedy of errors" that surrounded these negotiations with a dry humour that actually made me laugh out loud.

This book is the result of extensive research in numerous archives related to the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) as well as government departments and studio records, trade papers and publicity materials. Vasey's focus on the development of external "self-regulation" from 1918 to 1933 is extremely useful. However, the sound period from 1927 to 1939 is Vasey's primary focus. In particular, Chapter Five, "Why is Mr. Brown Eating Spaghetti? Content Regulation and the Production Code Administration", is an excellent example of how Vasey theoretically positions specific case studies on 1930s Hollywood treatment of illegitimacy, abortion and ethnic bigotry without losing in-depth historical detail.

Vasey's book proposes industrial and political explanations for the myopic conventions of representation in 1930s Hollywood films. The specific industrial and historical context of Hollywood after the introduction of sound was a particularly fragmented one. American and overseas markets imposed different levels of censorship on Hollywood's modes of production and distribution and helped to define the practices of the MPPDA. Vasey offers a complex and international understanding of the Hollywood system of production where distribution strategies particularly determined production policies and regulatory practices of the PCA. Vasey argues that this practice resulted in conventions such as; the mythical kingdom setting, religious representations and the use of white actors to play ethnic roles in a global kind of "blackface". This account of how industrial and political negotiation and Jason S. Joy's strategy of the "principle of deniability" (209) produced culturally and politically acceptable products for the broadest number of markets is Vasey's main contribution.

One of the strengths of this book is the way in which it considers ethnic representations in context. Russian costumes and characters were extremely popular in 1930s film. Vasey places this convention within the context of foreign audiences and international politics. Vasey argues that Russians were a "safe" choice as villains in the 1930s without fear of reprisal because Russian "indignation was cheap" (54). The Soviet Union was a relatively small market for Hollywood and had little political bargaining power. Conversely, Vasey also details the ways in which other countries - such as France and Britain - censored and banned Hollywood films that contained questionable or offensive representations. Vasey's account of the influence of foreign "friendly advisors" (80) and France's Baron Valentin Mandelstamm (who insisted he be paid for his consultancy services on cultural representation) are particularly consequential.

However, since Vasey makes so many original arguments, she proposes a number of secondary points that she does not have time to adequately expand. Clearly, this is due to her comprehensive rather than inadequate grasp of the subject. Yet some of her tangential points are fascinating and it was disappointing that they were only superficially addressed. One of the few weak explanations in the book is in her examination of Mexican representation with the short case study of *Woman Trap* (Paramount, 1936). Vasey discusses the recidivistic "greaser" stereotype of Mexicans but she never offers a strong reason as to why Hollywood persisted in these racist portrayals. Vasey posits that problems with Mexican government bans had been one factor in the creation of the MPPDA in 1922. It was an important market even before World War II. Thus, her suggestion that Hollywood producers could not resist the "easy exoticism" (171) of Mexican stereotypes is not adequate. Her assertion that films like *Woman Trap* which could depend on domestic B theatres to recoup costs were able to ignore the "technical challenges" (174) of foreign markets offers more but still could have benefited from further attention. Even so this kind of problem is characteristic in books that survey a broad period and subject matter and to her credit is a rare occurrence in her book.

Vasey's book is extremely well researched and contributes new knowledge and arguments to the field of censorship history. Vasey's book is not only relevant to film history (specifically histories of censorship and the Hollywood studio system modes of production) but also to genre studies, national cinema and representations of race, ethnicity and sexuality. Vasey's book is innovative and signposts a number of related areas for further research in her field. As an excellent example of film scholarship, *The World According to Hollywood 1918-1939* is certainly worth reading even if it is not in your area.