African Cinemas: Decolonizing the Gaze

By Olivier Barlet
London: Zed Books, 2000. ISBN 1-85649-743-7. 71 illustrations, xii + 315pp. £17.95 (pbk)

A review by Martin Stollery, Southampton Institute, UK

African films briefly gained a new currency in Western Europe and North America during the period between mid-1980s Live Aid optimism and mid-1990s despairing Western media representations of Rwandan genocide. Olivier Barlet's *African Cinemas: Decolonizing the Gaze*, an updated English translation of his 1996 *Cinémas d'Afrique Noire*, is the first book to reflect on this moment. The "fickle audience in the Northern hemisphere" (251-9), which made films like *Yeelen* (Cissé, 1987) and *Tilaï* (Ouedraogo, 1990) art cinema successes, now tends to look elsewhere for its exoticism. Although African films are no longer in fashion their increased visibility contributed to a mini-boom in Western European and North American African cinema scholarship during the 1990s. In this book Barlet invites audiences in these locations to be less fickle, outlining instead an approach to watching African films where the spectator: "grasp's' the spirit of a work, to take what the film maker attempted to put into it, not what you think you recognize in it. It would be better to allow oneself to lose one's bearings, to let oneself be carried along by emotion, to replace a deductive approach by an intuitive perception of the film, and let oneself learn what the Other is teaching that is new" (213). One problem with this otherwise enabling approach is that it effectively sidelines consideration of African diaspora audiences' relationships to African films, which cannot quite be accomodated into this Self (implicitly white spectator)/Other (black African film) paradigm.

Barlet grounds his intuitions and contextualises the African films he discusses through African proverbs and the work of African intellectuals such as Amadou Hampaté Bâ. These feature alongside more familiar reference points such as Barthes and Baudrillard. One of the book's strengths is the large amount of original interview material it incorporates. African directors and other players, including television and funding agency executives who greenlight film projects, offer commentary on specific films and the current state of African cinema as a whole. This strategic prioritisation of the director's voice is more than old-fashioned auteurism; given the realities of African film production it serves an important function within the constant struggle to maintain visibility and secure funding for future work.

Previous 1990s single authored books such as Manthia Diawara's classic *African Cinema* (1992) and Nwachukwu Frank Ukadike's *Black African Cinema* (1994) strive for some kind of historical overview. Barlet's personalised approach results in a more fragmentary text, broadly subdivided between thematic, narrative and economic sections, with an emphasis upon contemporary developments. Established issues such as the rejection of colonial stereotypes, orality in African film, and the reformulation of tradition/modernity oppositions are explored. Of the latter Barlet writes eloquently: "That opposition can be transcended not by systematically disconnecting from modernity, but by affirming one's cultural roots in one's manner of apprehending it" (88). In addition to summarising established debates *African*

Cinemas discusses other issues less often aired, including humour in African cinemas, African film actors, and recent changes in funding structures and distribution and exhibition practices. The text is accompanied by many previously unpublished photographs of cinema buildings in Africa, film posters, and film makers at work. They reinforce the impression of this being a book with something new to say.

African Cinemas' situated approach, exploratory structure and enthusiasm for its subject matter make it a useful resource for teachers of African cinema in Western European and North American contexts. The elegant, accessible intelligence of Barlet's writing, aided by Chris Turner's translation, pitches the book at a wider audience than an exclusively academic one. An appendix, "where to see black African films", provides comprehensive listing of festival locations, dates and contact details. To describe Barlet's book as a thoroughly researched festival handbook, an ethical consumer's guide for (white) Western readers who wish (and have the means) to seek out, enjoy and interact with African films as more than exotic curios is not to belittle its considerable achievement.

"The African audience is anything but homogenous" (232-50), *African Cinemas'* tantalising chapter on exhibition and reception in Africa, touches upon everything from combating ticket fraud to employing town criers to advertise the screening of African films. Much research remains to be done in this area. Such knowledge would be as valuable to African film makers as it would be to scholars. Barlet documents in other chapters how Western sources of funding and art cinema audiences for African film are declining. In this context understanding and connecting with African audiences becomes more crucial than ever. Barlet's primary concern is to expand the horizons of white Western audiences for African film. To his credit he acknowledges (215-17) there are also African critics attempting to do the same for African audiences. As several film makers contributing to the year 2000's other major publication on African cinema (June Givanni ed., *Symbolic Narratives/African Cinema*) point out, these voices are routinely overlooked in English language discussions of African cinemas. Future translations could enrich the field by making what they have to say more widely available.

An Argentine Passion: María Luisa Bemberg and her Films

By John King, Sheila Whitaker and Rosa Bosch (eds.)
London & New York: Verso, 2000. ISBN 1-85984-308-5. 38 illustrations, x+234pp. £15.00 (pbk), £40.00 (hbk)

A review by Bernard McGuirk, University of Nottingham, UK

"The case of María Luisa Bemberg adds a necessary complexity to what is often a Manichean debate. Bemberg was the first director in Latin America to make systematic use of non-Spanish speaking 'stars' '…' Such figures obviously increase the possibility of a film entering international markets. They are not used as luminous 'extras' '…' Instead, they are the protagonists, with an essential narrative function that can both use and reassess their 'star' status." Thus writes John King in the opening chapter (25). King's crucial role in raising the stakes in the projection of Latin American cultures to English-speaking publics has long been established, not least in his *Magical Reels: A History of Cinema in Latin America* (1990, republished, also by Verso, in expanded form, in 2000). In that seminal book he had warned: "We must beware of using sixties rhetoric to condemn the very different realities of the 1980s" (96), referring to the predominating critical climate out of which a certain prescriptiveness had emerged. More than most, King's work represents a coming of age of criticism on Latin American film. In the present volume, he joins Sheila Whitaker and Rosa Bosch in assembling high-calibre studies on the full range of Bemberg's films and the recollections of a number of directors, producers and actors who worked with her from her very late directing debut at 58 to her death, in 1995, at the age of 73.

For those seeking insights into the socio-political Argentine context of the remarkable career of Bemberg, King's meticulously informed and informative essay offers a *sans pareil* cartography of a personal journey as it shadows, and is shadowed by, the turbulent Perón and *proceso* (ie '70s and '80s) dictatorship periods. He negotiates her coping with censorship and self-censorship, her working relations with other artists and her hardly uncontroversial if unprecedented commercial impact. "Almost uniquely in Latin America, all her films were successful and profits could fund the next movie (in conjunction, increasingly, with co-production money)" (20): and this book goes a long way to explaining why. In a humorous aside on Bemberg's knack of timing her releases to coincide with raw moments in the national consciousness (*Señora de nadie* premiered on the day of the Falklands/Malvinas invasion, *Camila* "the first and biggest box office success of the post-dictatorship Alfonsín regime"), King remarks: "in the months following its release, one girl in every six born in that period was named Camila" (23).

The nitty-gritty of working with the director is entertainingly, and often poignantly, explored by Lita Stantic, Jorge Goldenberg, Félix Monti, Julie Christie, Gabriela Massuh, Mercedes García Guevara and Alejandro Maci. Her first scripts and feature films are fascinatingly probed and put into a vital feminist sociological perspective by Catherine Grant in an

impressively detailed study, particularly strong on close cinematographic analysis though never failing to situate Bemberg's ideological enterprise in the broadest comparative international terms.

In King's translation, Alan Pauls' essay on *Camila* as melodrama is particularly welcome, unapologetically asserting it to be "a film that has no shame, like *Adèle H* by Truffaut and Polanski's *Tess*" (117) and that, as Bemberg states, projects "a feminine gaze onto history" (112). Readers familiar with Elia Geoffrey Kantaris's elliptical, suggestive and ever insight-laden style will thrill to his psychoanalytical and postcolonialist readings of *Miss Mary* (1986). The colonized mien and the gendered gaze figure prominently in his dismantling of Argentina's Fascistic oligarchies' cultivating of the nation's status as unofficial member of the British Empire. For Kantaris, "Bemberg's challenge to the representational systems both of cinema and of history ... does not come in grand sweeping gestures like those of Fernando Solanas's 'Third cinema' ... rather, in her detailed reconstruction of women's history ..., the nineteenth-century British attempts at colonising Argentina could only be read by an Argentine audience watching the film in 1986 as allusions to the colonial Malvinas/Falklands conflict that had marked the end of the dictatorship"(135). As for the gender battle, several of the contributors here take up Bemberg's own telling analogy: "Marriage is like the nation, and the best prison is the one that is invisible" (124).

From prison to convent cell, and Denise Miller's impressive analysis of Bemberg at her most intellectually ambitious, in her engagement with Octavio Paz and the Mexican nun Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (*Yo, la peor de todas*, 1990). Via the "gaze at vacancy 'of' the first great modern poem" (*First Dream*), Bemberg has Sor Juana (1648-95) "state that knowledge is always transgression, and more so in a woman" (144). Thus, for Miller, "Bemberg has taken feminist liberties with Paz," setting a "more overtly feminist agenda" (145). She proceeds, with sustained brilliance, to show the effect of a "de-nunning" (148) performed by the film with a view to encapsulating a broader, albeit more transgressive, entrapment of women.

To Bemberg's last film, *De eso no se habla* (1993), two shorter though perceptive essays are devoted, by Jason Wilson and Kathleen Newman. One traces the problematic shift from Julio Llinás's short story to Bemberg's famous (notorious) projection of the micro-monstrosity of bourgeois-provincial Argentina's repressed and repressive sexuality. The other situates such a screening of the nation alongside contemporary instances, from elsewhere in Latin America, of "cinemas of national crisis" (190) facing the challenges of globalization amidst the continent's cries for democratization.

In a double post-script, Fiona Mackintosh performs an autopsy on the director's uncompleted scripting of Silvina Ocampo's *El impostor* (1948); but the last word is left to Bemberg and her 1989 insistence: "I had to stand behind a camera in order to be true to my own script and to unravel the common thread to all my transgressing characters" (220). An Argentine *woman*'s passion… *ipsa dixit*.

Anatomy of Film, Third Edition

A review by Bob Rehak, Indiana University, USA

If *Anatomy of Film* turns from the vertiginous peaks of High Theory -- so roundly (and unconvincingly) denounced in David Bordwell and Noel Carroll's *Post-Theory* polemic -- and opts instead for a traditional approach to comprehending and assessing cinematic storytelling and style, it does so with vast referential prowess and a certain curmudgeonly flair, insisting on standards of taste and legitimacy that some will likely characterize as retrograde. This is both its saving grace and its most telling limitation, resulting in a work of admirably principled scholarship but sometimes painful dryness. Its effectiveness as an introductory college-level film studies text should be weighed against the possibility that undergraduate students will reject out-of-hand Bernard F. Dick's steadfastly risk-free critical perspective. In the end, the book may simply fail to convince students of its relevance to their own media practice, or penetrate their unerring radar for hipness (skewed or unfair though those criteria may be). This seems doubly unfortunate in light of Dick's avowed intent to avoid jargon and render the inner workings of narrative film in transparent and approachable terms. Yet reader resistance is an essential hurdle for any text to leap before it can be put into meaningful and productive pedagogical use.

Loath to overstate its metaphor, *Anatomy* does nonetheless anatomize its object, moving from first principles of narrative economy through progressively more complex conceptual schema crucial to working untrained viewers loose from the sense that movies "just are" and countering the anesthetic effects of an aesthetic medium. Chapters one to three, which lay out the language of cinematography, editing, and sound, are models of thorough description, pairing concise definitions with references to both vintage and contemporary film texts. At times these endless examples threaten to overwhelm the taxonomy, as in a discussion of the close-up (37-38) that draws on no less than ten films (as well as a Breughel painting) in order to illustrate the dimensions of this fairly straightforward concept. This empirical exhaustiveness slows progress through the text and would perhaps be better augmented and compressed by tables, charts, even bulleted lists. At the same time, it provides a rich inventory of clips that could be easily deployed in the classroom.

Anatomy's discussion, in chapters four and five, of more abstract and problematic aspects of film interpretation -- genre, subtext -- strikes a necessary balance between the contestations of theory and the glossing necessary to reach viewers who are just becoming aware of film's artifactual nature. Concepts of nested signification and intertextual reference are presented particularly deftly, moving from an overview of myth (this is very much a literary approach to film) to specific instances of the construction of meaning through iconic studies of Bogart, Pacino, and Nicholson. It is in these sections that *Anatomy* most successfully weds intellectualism and clarity. Also helpful are the sample student essay, screenplay excerpts, and suggestions for building a film studies library that appear toward the conclusion. If little

of this material outdoes the cornerstone of contemporary college-level film studies instruction, Bordwell and Thompson's *Film Art*, Dick's book at least pares down *Film Art*'s mass to a more efficient, and in some ways more palatable, package.

Auteurism is addressed through the figures of Billy Wilder -- whose interview with Dick unfortunately spends more time rehashing stories of the studio system than in deconstructing the notion of director as author -- and, rather oddly, Alan Alda, whose commentary is cogent and entertaining but of questionable relevance to appreciating contemporary conditions of film production. The use of Wilder and Alda suggests content and perspective held over from previous editions, a both-feet-in-the-past approach that, again, raises the question of *Anatomy*'s ability to speak with cultural currency and authority.

While it may seem petty -- or, worse, merely fashionable -- to prefer a conversation with, say, the Wachowski Brothers over one with Alan Alda, more of a case can be made against *Anatomy*'s compartmentalizing of critical theory: relegated to a single chapter, the overview of major theoretical approaches (Russian formalism, semiotics, and so on) is rushed and perfunctory. Particularly striking is Dick's treatment of feminist criticism, which touches on Lacan and his deployment by Laura Mulvey, but leaves unaddressed Dayan and Oudart's notion of suture, Baudry's discussion of the apparatus, and other hallmarks of *Screen* theory, not to mention the ways in which these concepts have been interrogated by identity politics, queer and critical race theory, and the emerging field of cybercultural studies. A full genealogy of these debates is clearly beyond the scope of Dick's project; yet the absence of even a cursory recounting is noticeable in a work that otherwise ably summarizes a century of viewing and understanding film. Taken with the factors mentioned above, *Anatomy of Film* seems to need another edition, one that undertakes a more adventurous integration of cultural and theoretical "highs" and "lows."

Anime from Akira to Princess Mononoke: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation

By Susan J. Napier
New York: Palgrave, 2000. ISBN 0-1322-3862-2. 288pp. £13.99 (pbk)

A review by Jay McRoy, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, USA

In *Anime from Akira to Princess Mononoke: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation*, Susan J. Napier sets out to "reveal some of the more fascinating and distinctive features of the anime world and ultimately illuminate the reasons behind 'anime's' global appeal" (10). Such a project is clearly an ambitious undertaking, and for the most part Napier succeeds in crafting a thoughtful and thoroughly researched study of an art form that, although still very much informed by Japanese culture, is nevertheless becoming increasingly global and commercialized, often to the dismay of some of anime's most loyal fans. Of course, given the variety of genres that have found representation throughout the history of anime, as well as the plurality of audiences that anime attracts, any attempt at providing an even remotely comprehensive investigation of anime as a cultural or aesthetic phenomenon will surely frustrate certain readers, especially those searching for a critical and intensive analysis of their favorite film or series. Indeed, any study of anime is destined to be as much about exclusion as it is about inclusion, and addressing every title that has garnered a devoted national or international following would be an exercise in futility. Happily, Napier does not attempt to provide a broad survey of anime, but, rather, narrows her critical focus to a handful of texts that best illustrate what she sees as particularly expansive thematic concerns. These include aesthetic and ontological reimaginings of identity (cultural, gendered, etc.) and corporeality within an increasingly technological universe, representations of the tensions between waning cultural traditions and emerging societal codes, and conceptualizations of both complex histories and possible futures. Furthermore, by concentrating on what she recognizes as "three major expressive modes" (12) in anime, namely the apocalyptic, the festive, and the elegaic, Napier provides a solid structure for her argument. This organizational logic may not appeal to every anime fan, but for readers interested in exploring anime's popularity both within Japan and in its increasingly global context, this book may very well become required reading.

Napier is at her strongest and most insightful in her discussions of anime's appeal both in Japan and internationally. Such explorations begin and end her book, providing an effective frame for the various close readings that constitute much of the text's remaining pages. Indeed, the study's overall success results from Napier's ability to balance her explication of anime's "powerful hold on Japanese popular culture" (19) with her theories regarding the art form's success in other, primarily Western, nations. Citing pictocentric traditions and a growing public awareness of Japan's role in world affairs, Napier discusses anime's national popularity in a manner that is every bit as compelling, if not more so, than her survey-based

speculations as to the art form's increasing success in Western markets. This understanding of the social, cultural, and political forces behind anime's popularity resonates throughout the entire book, informing her examinations of individual texts and directors.

Furthermore, although each of the chapters dedicated to addressing the thematics and cultural significance of various anime productions and genres reveal Napier's thorough knowledge of her subject matter, certain analyses rise above others as indispensable contributions to current anime scholarship. Marred only by momentary and, at times, seemingly tangential excursions into a discourse of Western psychoanalysis that feels superfluous beside her grounding of anime within a solid cultural/historical framework, part two of her book -- a collection of four essays that explore representations of the body, metamorphosis, and identity in popular pornographic anime like *La Blue Girl* and well-known science fiction productions like *Akira*, *Wicked City*, *Evangelion*, and *Ghost in the Shell* -- is worth the cost of the text alone. Particularly effective are those passages in which Napier demonstrates how anime's visual tropology -- including everything from teenage cyberpunks to demonic tentacle rape -- provides visual metaphors for numerous global and culturally specific anxieties emerging in response to changing social, sexual, and gender codes

Less engaging, however, is Napier's discussion of the image of the *Shojo* in anime; here, her aesthetic and cultural analysis is hampered by extensive plot summary, as well as by redundant passages that may have resulted from the perceived need to educate her audience about an aspect of traditional Japanese culture with which many Western readers may not be familiar. This is not to say that her investigation of these so-called "magical girls" fails to conform with the book's overall scope and structure. In fact, the chapter contributes further to Napier's already complex discussion of gender roles and their occasional subversion through visual and narrative means. However, Napier's prose in this portion of her study lacks a certain enthusiasm for her subject matter that the earlier chapters convey. Indeed, if one couples these earlier chapters with her subsequent (and significantly more engaging) examination of apocalypse in anime as a complicated, elegiac experience that conveys notions of both destruction and re-birth, one comes away from Napier's book with a fuller understanding of a medium that, in the imaginations of an increasingly larger and diverse Western audience, is simultaneously "different" (240) and familiar, occasionally frustrating in its cultural opacity and yet increasingly accessible in its tropes and themes.

The Bare Facts Video Guide

By Craig Hosoda
London: Titan, 2000. ISBN 1-84023-215-3. i+1016pp. £19.99 (pbk)

A review by Rebecca D. Feasey, University of Nottingham, UK

This guide comes highly recommended by no less an authority than Loaded magazine. It's a list of sightings of tits and bums in tiny print. Female film-goers now await impatiently Hosoda's catalogue raisonné of views of Jean-Hughes Anglade's bottom and Harvey Keitel's member (*Sight and Sound*, May 1999: 32).

Sight and Sound refers to *Bare Facts* as a list of tits and bums in tiny print, and the respectable film magazine is correct in its summary of the video guide. *Bare Facts* is an exhaustive thousand-page catalogue that lists the whereabouts of naked and partially naked female performers on film. Craig Hosoda tells the intended heterosexual male spectator what films to rent and when to freeze-frame for a look at breasts, buns and body doubles from a wide range of actresses ranging alphabetically from Angela Aames to Daphne Zuniga.

Before entering into a vehement diatribe against the aggressively sexist and misogynistic nature of the all-female *Bare Facts* guide, one must at least thank Hosoda for being open and honest about the aims and objectives of his book. At no point in his work does he try any clever marketing campaigns or post-modern promotions to disguise the sexual and the potentially sexist nature of his research. Rather, the author proudly announces that his research is a unique guide to celebrity nudity on video with more actresses than ever before!

Furthermore, Hosoda situates *Bare Facts* within the mass culture tradition by acknowledging the fact that his work will never win the Pulitzer Prize. From such a populist perspective, the author could be applauded for his intricate textual analysis, incredible attention to detail and unwavering dedication to heterosexual male desire. For example, whilst Sharon Stone's three-second flash in *Basic Instinct* (1992) may have shaken the world, it is less well known that the actress disrobed in numerous pre-*Instinct* films such as *Irreconcilable Differences* (1984), *Cold Steel* (1987) *Blood & Sand* (1989) and *Year of the Gun* (1991).

I have included a brief reference to *Sight and Sound*'s review of the movie guide because it is interesting to witness how quickly this niche film publication was to deride Hosoda for his seemingly sexist all female volume. What is interesting here is the fact that the reviewer so clearly failed to look at the history of the film guide before demoting the text in such an elitist review. If the *Sight and Sound* reviewer had glanced over earlier editions of the movie guide, they would have been made aware of the fact that the guide did originally contain "bare facts" about both male and female performers.

In the original 1996 edition, Craig Hosoda tells the reader that *Bare Facts* is the place to find your favorite actors and actresses nude on video. However, in both the 1999 and this 2000 edition, the author concludes that the revised versions are the place to find your favorite

actresses only. In the introduction to the 1999 edition, Hosoda explains why he turned *Bare Facts* from a uni-sex text to a women-only arena. Firstly, the author reveals that the actors section was woefully thin, and that he had to enlist "one timer" actors to make up male members in the book. Secondly, we are told that only men could ever be sad enough to want to know how many minutes into a film someone gets their kit-off. From this perspective, the revised *Bare Facts Guide* is women's breasts and buns only -- cross-referenced by name in one section and by film (including television shows and cable series) in the second.

I refer again to the *Sight and Sound* review of the video guide as I look at the ways in which this high-brow publication derided *Bare Facts* through an intertextual reference to *Loaded* magazine. *Loaded* is a populist glossy monthly magazine that incorporates fashions, feature articles and playboy-type centre-folds for the young heterosexual male. *Sight and Sound* uses this T&A magazine as a crucial intertext in order to denigrate the video guide through an association with such male-defined pseudo soft-core.

Although at first glance it would seem that *Sight and Sound* derides *Bare Facts* for its mind-numbing attention to sexist details and male desires, I would argue that such formations of taste have less to do with the crude cataloguing of female nudity in the cinema, and more to do with wider cultural distinctions. Film theory has long been attracted to research on representations of the female body as a legitimate and credible area of study. For example, John Berger's work on the naked and the nude has been canonised as one of the most stimulating and influential books on contemporary art, whilst more recently John D'Emilio's work on the history of sexuality was received as a meticulous, comprehensive and intelligent survey of sex and sexuality in America. In contrast, Hosoda's research on the naked and the nude is derided for its sexist methodology and ridiculed for its soft-core status. This distinction between the low-brow status of *Bare Facts* and the high-brow status of the academic tradition is based in part on accessibility and the difference between unique and mass-produced objects. In this way, Berger's *Ways of Seeing* and D'Emilio's *Intimate Matters* have been canonised as academic fodder whilst *Bare Facts* has been demoted to the status of mass produced popular culture. Such cultural distinctions allow academia to claim both taste and authenticity over the inferiority of this popular video guide.

With such taste formations, cultural distinctions and feminist tirades in mind, I realise that I may stand alone in my praise for Hosoda's all-female catalogue of bare-facts and baser instincts; however I thank the author for his controversial contribution to the academic community. It is worth noting that whilst numerous film and video guide books ranging from *Virgin* to *Variety* and *Halliwells* to *Videohound* have been usurped by internet movie databases, *Bare Facts* remains unchallenged in its dedication to cataloguing female nudity on screen!

Blockbuster TV: Must-See Sitcoms in the Network Era

A review by Brett Mills, University of Glamorgan, UK

British and American studies of television sitcom have always had to grapple with the different social positions and audience reaches that the genre achieves in both countries. In Britain, the sitcom has occupied an important position for both broadcasters and audiences, but, particularly over the last two decades, has had to accept that it simply isn't as popular as soap opera. To be sure, various individual programmes become massive hits -- *Only Fools and Horses* (1981-96, 2001, 2002) being the most obvious recent example -- but television ratings are invariably dominated by soaps. The cultural position and social importance of sitcom in Britain, then, is constantly in doubt, and analyses of it have often focused on it as a genre responding to social concerns much less obviously than soap.

Staiger's book, conversely, rests on readings of the sitcom which can only take place in American culture. That is, her focus is on those sitcoms whose ratings "significantly exceed those of their second- or third-rated (or even lower) competitors; the programs are 'ratings busters' or in Hollywood movie terms 'blockbusters'" (2-3). Her interest is in programmes which were clearly watched by bigger audiences than is the case for most American television, and to explore these phenomena "within the contexts of American television media" (2).

Therefore, the book begins with a large amount of ratings analysis, in which Staiger shows that, in the history of American broadcasting, there have only been four programmes which have achieved this goal: *The Beverly Hillbillies* (1962-71); *All in the Family* (1970-83); *Laverne and Shirley* (1975-83); *The Cosby Show* (1984-92). Of course, it's highly significant that these four are sitcoms; Staiger's underlying thesis rests on wondering why it should be sitcoms -- and, by extension, these four sitcoms in particular -- which have attracted audiences unheard of for other programmes or genres.

Staiger deals with each of the programmes in turn, placing them in their historical context and making connections between their diegeses, and social and political factors at the time. Furthermore, she focuses on what she calls "'surrogate consumers', spokespersons for these public institutions 'who' praise or challenge these hit programs for various reasons, bringing in different subaudiences to view the sitcom" (4). The most obvious of these are newspaper reviewers, and Staiger outlines critical responses to each of the programmes thoroughly, noting that for each of them, a significant critical debate about the meanings, significance, and appropriateness of the programmes is apparent. Clearly, then, critics felt each of these programmes was worth discussing, and Staiger infers that this would have lead to audiences tuning in.

As stated before, this is a study which could only really take place in America, but this is not only because it is there where the sitcom is dominant. Instead, such a focus on ratings rests on an assumption that audience size is important, and this is only really the case in a television industry which is nothing but commercial. I find it unlikely that British academics would be interested in the reasons behind the massive popularity of specific programmes, and that's because the broadcasting industries, and the academics who study them, have slightly different goals. The ethnographic turn of much media analysis in Britain is instead interested in specific, localised, domestic readings of programmes, and those readings have been explored in terms of empathy, understanding, and politics. Enjoyment has never really been a concern. It may be for this reason that, to me, Staiger's analysis seems to ignore the individual relationship with media that each of us has, and therefore to say a lot about the audience without finding out who and what that audience is. There are brief acknowledgements of the complex makeup of viewers in the section discussing *The Cosby Show*, where different responses to the programme by white and African-American viewers are discussed. However, considering there's already a book length study of this phenomenon by Jhally and Lewis -- you would think that this would be of greater concern throughout.

Indeed, there's a hole throughout the centre of this study, and it results from ignoring the nature of audiences. That is, if you're going to try and find out the reasons why certain programmes are significantly more popular than others, it seems perverse to do that by only analysing the text, its production and historical context, and reviewers' responses to it. Indeed, all of those factors which Staiger correlates with the popularity of these programmes -- reflecting social concerns, new forms of representation, positive critical response -- can be seen in a massive array of other programmes, whether sitcoms or not. Clearly there's something else going on within the relationship between these programmes and their audiences which kept significant numbers repeatedly tuning in. Because of this, the book outlines factors only partly relevant to its aims, and, most worryingly, adopts a tone towards the end which implies that the reasons for the success of these programmes has been explicated. I'd say there's many more questions to be asked and avenues of enquiry to be explored and, drawing on my sensitivity to the slapdash way in which sitcom is repeatedly analysed within media studies, would argue that this is representative of a surprising amount of work on comedy.

Britain and the American Cinema

By Tom Ryall
London: Sage, 2001. ISBN 0-7619-5447-3, 185 pp. £54.23 (hbk)

A review by Sarah Street, University of Bristol, UK

At times stifling and volatile, while at others symbiotic and productive, the dynamic between Britain and the American cinema has always been driven by contradictory impulses. Ryall's book charts the multifarious phases and features of Anglo-American film relations, ranging from the attractiveness of Britain as a production centre for Hollywood companies, to the cultural appeal of British subject matter from Shakespeare to Sherlock Holmes. The "special" celluloid relationship was established early on in the twentieth century, as Hollywood developed its export policies, and with Britain fast becoming acknowledged as its most lucrative overseas market. Yet, as Ryall explains, the story is not simply one of economic imperialism. The common language facilitated economic cross-fertilization and the idea of cultural symbiosis, creating a celluloid incarnation of the Anglo-American "special relationship" that is more readily associated with politics. Despite the charge frequently leveled against the contaminating effects of "Americanization" in Britain, a cultural climate co-existed which was far more conducive to collaboration, reciprocity and transatlantic trade. Traffic in stars and directors was an important element of the "special relationship", since Hollywood demonstrated a consistent fascination with British literature and history, as well as reaping economic benefits from production subsidiaries in Britain. Quota legislation acted as an incentive for Hollywood to establish "outposts" in Europe, introducing the phenomenon of the Hollywood "British" film which qualified for quota protection while at the same time competing with films produced by "legitimate" British companies. Another strategy was to fund British production companies, creating an important -- if intermittent -- source of production finance in a severely undercapitalised domestic British film industry.

The stakes were not however equal and British films were often the junior partners in terms of gaining access either to American cinemas or to the British domestic market. It is ironic that Hollywood's own versions of "Britishness" were frequently more popular with British and American audiences than the genuine articles produced by British companies. Indeed, the most interesting chapter in Ryall's book describes how Hollywood adapted British history and culture, resulting in a fascinating combination of Hollywood conventions and British source material. An enduring set of stereotypes was produced which ranged across genres and studios, arguably exerting an influence on films produced by British companies. In turn, British audiences, by dint of the success of Hollywood's films on British screens, understood and appreciated narrative cinema primarily with reference to the Hollywood model of "Britishness". Rather than locate the enthusiasm for British subject-matter in the 1930s, Ryall mentions earlier examples in the 1910s and 1920s, providing a fascinating pre-history that deserves more in-depth analysis. A strength of Ryall's approach is, however, his consideration of theoretical debates about history and fiction, notions of adaptation and Richard Maltby's useful conception of "history" as a production value. What emerges is an appreciation of the importance of British culture and history in Hollywood cinema, prompted by motives of "cultural elevation", or a desire to exploit "the exotic and spectacular potential of location and setting." Another incentive was an engagement with "the inspirational and

heroic possibilities inherent in the battles and romances of the past" and "the colourful myths which have attached themselves to actual historical figures" (144).

Ryall's book provides a very good introduction to a broad and multi-faceted subject. Based on research from trade papers and other published material, it inevitably lacks the depth that would have been achieved had primary sources, such as company records, private papers and statistics, been used. Occasionally this can lead to inaccuracies, for example, the assertion that apart from *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933) very few British films in the 1930s were successful in America (89). Close analysis of the careers of British films, including *The Ghost Goes West* (1935), *Victoria the Great* (1937), *Drums* (1938) and *The Four Feathers* (1939), proves that *Henry VIII* was not an isolated example but more of a precedent for the future success of British film exports. Access to the mass market was certainly difficult, but many British films appealed to "niche" audiences, occasionally 'crossing over' into wider markets. While useful, statistics gained from trade papers must be treated with caution. The book nevertheless demonstrates a wide-ranging understanding of the key factors that have shaped British cinema, raising to a more sophisticated level the debate about impact of "Americanization" on British culture. Ryall makes a convincing case for the converse proposition that exposes the extent to which Hollywood was influenced by British culture. *Britain and the American Cinema* therefore presents a lucid, engaging and stimulating account that will surely provoke further research into this fascinating and important aspect of both British and Hollywood cinema history.

Celluloid Indians

By Jacqueline Kilpatrick
Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999. ISBN 0-8032-7790-3. xviii + 261 pp. £15.50 (pbk)

A review by Ragan Rhyne, New York University, USA

In *Celluloid Indians*, Jacqueline Kilpatrick analyzes the history of Native American representations in both Indian and non-Indian produced United States and Canadian film. Rather than an exhaustive survey, *Celluloid Indians* is an outline of the dominant stereotypes of North American indigenous peoples in representative texts. In a series of thematic and chronological film readings, from D. W. Griffith's *The Battle at Elderbrush Gulch* (1914) to Chris Eyre's 1998 film *Smoke Signals*, she historicizes these representations and examines the ways in which these stereotypes have been deployed during key historical moments. Indeed, one of the book's strengths is Kilpatrick's insightful readings of Anglo-American appropriations of these very stereotypes for political, spiritual and ecological movements.

Celluloid Indians is arranged chronologically, beginning with the "genesis" of American Indian stereotypes in ideals of manifest destiny, James Fennimore Cooper's novels, and Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Shows. Unfortunately, the most interesting portion of this chapter is also the least developed. Kilpatrick situates late nineteenth century Wild West shows as the genesis of Native American stereotypes in popular culture. A more interesting question, though -- one that isn't explicitly addressed -- is how the spectacle of the Wild West show informed the aesthetic conventions of the Western film genre.

Kilpatrick's survey continues with readings of silent film and early "cowboy talkies." In a productive departure from similar studies, she emphasizes important events in the history of indigenous rights activism in the United States, illustrating the very material, economic, legal and civil consequences of these stereotypes. Further, Kilpatrick draws ties between post-WWII social anxieties and representations of the Native American as a "malleable metaphor," most prominently for the black civil rights movement of the 1960s. Indeed, as Kilpatrick laments, Native peoples have been used to tell a variety of stories, though rarely their own. This critique extends to readings of films of the 1980s and 1990s (*Dances With Wolves*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Pocahontas*, et. al), in which Kilpatrick recognizes an increased sensitivity to Native issues, but often at the expense of historical accuracy and self-representation. In a rather incongruous inclusion, Kilpatrick includes a reading of *The Emerald Forest*, the only filmic representation of South American indigenous people in *Celluloid Indians*. The addition of *The Emerald Forest* seems oddly placed in a survey of representations of specifically North American native peoples, and runs the danger of implying a sort of pan-continental "Indian-ness" that threatens to erase the historical and political specificities of South American natives. In a study whose strength lies in its historical specificity, Kilpatrick would have done better to limit her scope more explicitly.

Perhaps the most insightful chapter of Kilpatrick's book is that which deals with contemporary film performed, produced and directed by Native Americans. Indeed, a primary

argument of the book is the importance of self-representation of Native communities. She argues for a reading of many Native produced films not on the merits of Anglo-industrial filmmaking, but rather as cultural texts written for Native communities themselves and in fact as a counter-aesthetic to the Hollywood mode of filmmaking. Sadly, however, she inverts this argument in her critique of *Smoke Signals*. Though she reads the film's use of indigenous aesthetics and narrative structures as a positive step toward self-representation, her main critique of the film centers on its (relatively) wide release and popular reception. Rather than understand the text as a contrapuntal narrative uniquely positioned to re-inscribe native stories into American film, she seems to regard its popular success as a liability, yet she doesn't fully interrogate the relationship between commercial viability and representation (odd, as her readings almost exclusively focus on commercial film). Kilpatrick argues that self-representation is an antidote to misrepresentation; however she fails to flesh out precisely what constitutes native filmmaking. Must native film be written, directed, produced, and performed by native peoples (as she seems to imply through her critiques), or is there a space for a multicultural collaboration and an integration of Native American aesthetics and stories into mainstream film?

Kilpatrick's book is not intended as an academic text and is truly accessible to a wide readership, specifically filmmakers themselves. However, it seems that for Kilpatrick, reaching a broad audience correlates to an avoidance of valuable theories of aesthetics that might have informed her argument. With only Bakhtin as her key theoretical influence (or at least citation), she leaves little room for a serious interrogation of the function of specifically visual media in the perpetuation of the stereotypes she deconstructs. Nevertheless, *Celluloid Indians* draws strong connections between representation and socio-political realities in a very effective survey. Kilpatrick has written a well-researched reception study that will surely serve as a useful starting point for both academics and filmmakers wishing to deconstruct these images and posit alternatives to them.

Close Up: Iranian Cinema Past, Present and Future

By Hamid Dabashi
London and New York: Verso, 2001. ISBN 1-85984-332-8. 31 illustrations, xii + 302pp.
£12.47 (pbk)

A review by Lina Khatib, University of Leicester, UK

With visionary films like *Kandahar* (2001) by Mohsen Makhmalbaf putting Iranian cinema yet again high up on the world's filmic agenda, there is a need for an in-depth study of this rich yet often neglected Third World cinema. Hamid Dabashi's book comes here as a window on this cinema that is at once personal, sociological, economic, historical and political.

Tracing the beginnings of Iranian cinema through an account of his own childhood encounters with the medium, Dabashi's introduction to the book is engaging and curious. Dabashi maintains his curiosity throughout the book, tactfully teasing out the intricacies of Iranian cinema's past, present, and future through a collage of personal analysis, interviews with Iranian film makers, and endless accounts of those memorable films that have commenced the globalism of Iranian cinema as we know it today.

The book begins and ends with much attention to the globalization of Iranian cinema, giving it its worth as a cinema that has become familiar with international film festivals and audiences and vice versa, while maintaining its local flavor.

After a personal and historical introduction that puts Iranian cinema in the context of the changing political situation in Iran, Dabashi introduces Iranian cinema as a project of modernity in the country. Cinema as such has taken over and yet goes hand in hand with poetry in Iran as a modernist art form that goes beyond theocracy. Dabashi is critical of totalitarianism in his country, stating that "Islamic theology… failed to adapt to the project of modernity," (14) and citing how the religious constitution initially opposed cinema. Cinema in particular, and art in general, is thus introduced as the third space that allows the formation of the nation, bypassing religion and colonialism. Dabashi even credits cinema with the emancipation of women in an era marked by political, religious and even personal oppression under the Shah, his son, and Khomeini. Dabashi does not pinpoint the irony in his historical accounts, leaving it to the reader to deduce the nature of a religious constitution that after 1979 embraced the propagandist potential of the same medium it had dogmatically rejected some decades earlier.

Dabashi is thus subtle in his criticism of the dominant system, at once pointing out the metaphors used in cinema to criticize this system and using cinema itself as a metaphor for the state of Iranian society under such a regime. Dabashi's book then is not a mere account of Iranian cinema *per se*; it is a successful multifaceted attempt at looking at this cinema from different angles, which contributes to a greater understanding of Iranian cinema, making the book an excellent source for informed and novice readers alike.

Dabashi then moves to devote his second chapter to Abbas Kiarostami, one of the great masters of Iranian cinema. Dabashi's account of Kiarostami's life and cinema revolves around Kiarostami's approach that aims at undoing reality and that adopts a Foucauldian take on Truth. Representing the world through children's eyes mainly (perhaps to surpass censorship, though Dabashi does not clearly state that), the world of Kiarostami is introduced by Dabashi, a world that metaphorically defies the system and criticizes rigidity and dictatorship and celebrates life.

The next three chapters are interviews with three more great filmmakers: Bahram Beiza'i, Bahman Farmanara and Mohsen Makhmalbaf. All three interviews move from the personal to the political in the directors' lives and works. Dabashi's informed comments lead the interviewees to discussions about cinema as an instrument that recreates mythologies and redefines reality; about the globalization of Iranian cinema; about questions of identity in Iran, the ignored literary context in which Iranian cinema exists, and issues of the concealing "nature" of Iranian culture. About struggling with uninformed censors, about sexism, about celebrating humanity and rejecting dogma and essentialism.

In the final two chapters Dabashi pays homage to the role of women as catalysts of modernity and defiance in Iran, transgressing the norms that men remain subservient to. He also criticizes the "old" generation of directors for their self-absorption and nativism, while seeing the new generation like Samira Makhmalbaf as a breath of fresh air whose works pay homage to the local while being global in scope. Using a clear yet sometimes almost lyrical language, Dabashi alerts us to the importance of digging beneath the surface when looking at cinema while acknowledging the difficulty of undoing the effects of colonialism as they are linked with modernity. The situation of cinema in Iran thus emerges as being complex, deeply rooted in history but critical of history at the same time, global yet local, self-reflective yet visionary. Dabashi's book remains one that pays respect to Iran's culture pioneers, criticizes rigid systems, celebrates the globalism of Iranian cinema and looks forward to a brighter future led by the new filmmakers who are now the Other, but who, as Dabashi says about Samira Makhmalbaf, have the tools to "liberate a nation" (276).

The Cognitive Semiotics of Film

By Warren Buckland
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. ISBN 0-521-78005-5. 186 pp. £35.00 (hbk)

A review by Tico Romao, Cheltenham and Gloucester College for Higher Education, UK

Warren Buckland's book has two primary aims. The first is to supply a critical commentary upon the work of certain continental film theorists, such as Francesco Casetti, Roger Odin, Michel Colin, and Dominique Chateau, and develop what he deems as the most promising aspects of their research. The second is to demonstrate that this tradition of cognitive film theory is explanatorily superior to its better known Anglo-American parallel (represented by David Bordwell's and Noël Carroll's work, amongst others) through its retention of key semiotic assumptions. It is the cognitivist rejection of film semiotics that Buckland specifically seeks to counter.

The book constitutes a companion piece of sorts to *The Film Spectator* (1995), an anthology edited by Buckland that brought together some of the core statements of the cognitive semiotic approach. As an exposition of this literature, Buckland's book is essential reading for anyone interested in gaining a thorough understanding of the cognitive and linguistic assumptions upon which this approach rests. As a refutation of the cognitivist critiques of film semiotics, however, the book is less successful. Buckland claims that cognitive semantics, enunciation theory, pragmatics, and transformational grammar are all fields derived from linguistics that have been profitably applied to the investigation of how spectators comprehend films. Yet apart from the application of transformational grammar to the study of comprehension of film sequences, none of the other instances can be truly said to continue the semiotic enterprise.

In Chapter Two, Buckland invokes George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's work on cognitive semantics as a means to replace Bordwell's strictly cognitivist account of cinematic perception. Lakoff and Johnson emphasise the role preconceptual bodily experiences plays in cognition, an emphasis that Buckland admits challenges the "basic assumptions of the Language Analysis tradition," including the semiotic tenet of the arbitrariness of the sign (41). If so, the reader is owed some explanation why a cognitive semantic account of cinematic perception is still to be countenanced as an instance of semiotic explanation. A similar problem can be found in Chapter Three where Buckland surveys the different theories of filmic enunciation proposed by Casetti and Metz. Finding both unsatisfactory, Buckland advances his own theory of enunciation that is based upon a non-linguistic notion of deixis (69). Again, if the most viable version of enunciation must be reformulated in ways that are more cognitive than linguistic, one can legitimately ask why such a move should not be considered an abandonment of the semiotic approach.

This reticence to fully specify the principles of semiotic investigation is most evident in Chapter Four where Buckland endorses Roger Odin's semi-pragmatic approach to film. In the chapter's opening paragraph, we are told that Odin understands "filmic competence as

predominantly pragmatic, with the result that meaning is determined, not by the internal, semantic constraints of *la langue*, or contingent grammatical rules, or by deictic markers, but by a multitude of external constraints" (77). A pragmatics of film so conceived would be impossible to square with Buckland's earlier definition of film semiotics as the investigation of filmic specificity by reference to its "underlying system of… invariant traits" (6). If the institutional context of reception exclusively determines filmic meaning, it is unclear how one is to apply the concept of a semiotic code to film in any conventional sense.

Even in Chapter Six where Buckland summarises Colin's application of Chomsky's transformational grammar to the investigation of the comprehension of filmic sequences, one can raise questions as to whether it is semiotic principles that are doing most of the explanatory work. Buckland asserts that Colin's Chomskyan reworking of Metz's *grande sytagmatique* possesses psychological reality, meaning that the theory aims to provide a formalised representation of a spectator's underlying competence when parsing filmic sequences (136). But when one turns to Colin's essay "Film Semiology as Cognitive Science", one can argue that the *grande sytagmatique* is psychologically instantiated in a different manner, in a way that relies upon inferential processes rather than a tacit knowledge of the "grammar" of film sequences. Colin proposes that spectators possess a general space planner, a mental module that draws inferences by which a spectator makes sense of the spatial relationships between shots. With inference playing the determining role, a question remains concerning which aspects of the general space planner are to be registered as semiotic in kind.

The upshot of these remarks is disconnected from the issue of the explanatory purchase of the research programmes discussed by Buckland. By my lights, it is the pragmatics of film which seems to offer the most promising avenue by which to investigate spectatorial comprehension, yet such an approach owes little to semiotics as traditionally conceived. The most interesting issue that Buckland's book inadvertently raises is whether the cognitive semiotic approach constitutes a true continuation of the semiotic enterprise or effects a complete transformation of its underlying assumptions. By abandoning the notion that signs are necessarily arbitrary, by redefining the concept of enunciation through an appeal to a non-linguistic domain, by suggesting that filmic meaning is devoid of intentional constraints, Buckland discards some of the main tenets that have historically guided the semiotic enterprise. Seen from this perspective, Buckland's embrasure of cognitive science does not so much rehabilitate semiotics, but lays the grounds for its conceptual transcendence.

The Documentary Film Movement: An Anthology

By Ian Aitken (ed.)
Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998. ISBN 0-7486-0948-2. 8 illustrations, x + 252 pp. £15.95 (pbk)

A review by John W. Campbell, California Polytechnic State University, USA

Based primarily on the original writings of its leaders and founders, this is the first anthology to cover the British documentary film movement of the 1930s and 40s. The book begins with an introduction by the author, Ian Aitken, as he describes the movement's history and its films. Each section of the original writings is accompanied by short commentaries by Aitken and a photograph of the period's luminaries of documentary film.

As Aitken points out, the documentary film movement discussed here has a legacy that continues to make itself felt on many levels, from the documentary film-makers themselves to the sponsors who help support their efforts. A number of different and competing accounts of the movement exist. Among them are differences of opinion regarding the movement's leader, John Grierson. As Aitken points out, some see Grierson and others as bunglers who undermined attempts to establish an effective system of public film-making in Britain. Others credit Grierson with the importance of establishing documentary film's relationship to modernity and democracy. These debates are not settled in the book perhaps, but through a look at the writings of the movement's leaders, one gains some valuable insight into their thought processes and struggles over what should be the content and direction of documentary films. These struggles over the basic ideas and concepts of the documentary film are featured in this book through the writings of Grierson, Paul Rotha, Alberto Cavalcanti, Humphrey Jennings, and Basil Wright. For those who may have only been exposed to their work through their films, reading this anthology would seem to add a layer of vital understanding of the history of the documentary film movement of this time period. It also makes one aware of some of the fundamental issues involved in the making of documentary films. These issues have changed little for today's documentary film-makers worldwide, who must balance their creative expression and viewpoints with those who sponsor them. The eloquent writings in this book on these problems are thought-provoking and illuminating.

One of the key issues in the documentary film movement was what exactly should a documentary be or what is, in fact, a documentary. A key idea that came out of the 1930s was that documentaries could find a voice for working-class culture and bring it into the public sphere. As Grierson writes, "So when we come to the documentary we come to the actual world of the streets, of the tenements and the factories, the living people and observation of living people…" (76). Aitken points to Grierson's own film, *Drifters*, which remains, according to Aitken, one of the most important films in the British cinema. As Grierson

writes about the documentary, "*Drifters* is about the sea and about fishermen and there is not a Piccadilly actor in the piece" (78).

The writings of Paul Rotha are also featured in the anthology. According to Aitken, Rotha left the documentary movement early, but this allowed him to reach a critical perspective on the movement which was unique among other film-makers of the era. Rotha noted in his writings that Grierson often tried to dissociate the word "art" from "documentary" and substituted instead such words as "information and public service" (155). This was, Rotha wrote, to better market the documentary to civil servants with little interest in creative endeavors. And as another film-maker, Albert Calvcanti, whose writings are also in the anthology wrote, "His 'Grierson' idea was that documentary was a kind of name that pleased the government" (189). Cavalcanti had a different conception of the documentary than Grierson's. Cavalcanti said, "Grierson little by little started creating the theory that they 'documentaries' should be put in a different, what he called non-theatrical circuit…it was as silly as calling those films documentary, I say, if films are good, they should and could be shown anywhere…there is no reason why they should be destined for only the parsons and for the church halls" (189). Another noted film-maker of the era, Basil Wright, said that Grierson "never really understood feature films, and so he argued that the two should remain quite separate" (239).

Grierson eventually left his leadership role in government documentaries. As for the real reasons for his departure, little seems to be known. The writings in the book suggest that Grierson's ideal of documentary film-making under government supervision became shattered. Grierson wrote, "I saw it as an instrument not only of education and illumination in our highly modern world but as an instrument highly necessary to a democratic society" (126). But Grierson also said, "in these days, political issues are such that personal freedom so many innocently seek cannot readily be expected where government funds apply and inevitable propagandist effects on mass audiences are involved" (120). As Aitken points out, Grierson's notion that documentary film-makers should work closely with civil servants and politicians to produce "educational" material came to a dead end after 1948 (55). According to Aitken, Grierson's film-makers found that when they worked closely with the government, "they were rendered powerless as a result" (55).

Rotha writes that had Grierson stayed with the government, perhaps that British documentary movement would not have disintegrated so quickly. But Rotha suggests that Grierson may have simply seen the future as he wrote, "Or did Grierson foresee that the knife-edge equation between the government and industrial sponsorship in a capitalist system, on the one hand, and the socially progressive outlook of the majority of documentary film-makers, on the other hand, would inevitably come to an end" (169). Grierson himself was reticent about some of these developments. But whatever really happened with Grierson and his administrative dealings, Aitken noted that the movement never occupied the central position within the British state that Grierson desired. As Aitken writes, "the disparity between his 'Grierson' original aspirations and what actually transpired was a considerable one."

Nonetheless, this book makes clear the importance of the ideas of the documentary movement of the 1930s and 40s. Film-makers continue to struggle with the issues of financing and editorial control, government sponsorship for propaganda purposes, adding entertainment values to increase marketability, giving a voice to those in society without one, and the aesthetics of documentaries. For anyone interested in these issues, this book is necessary reading for it may not only serve to educate, but to inspire. As Grierson writes of

making *Drifters*, "notions are notions and pictures are pictures, and no knowledge of cinematic anatomy can guarantee that extra something which is the breath of life to a picture…It has to feel its way through the appearances of things, choosing, discarding and choosing again, seeking always those more significant appearances which are like yeast to the plain dough of context. Sometimes they are there for the taking; as often as not you have to make a journey into a far country to find them. That, however, is no more difficult for cinema than for poetry. The camera is by instinct, if not by training, a wanderer" (81).

Fan Cultures

By Matt Hills
London: Routledge, 2002. ISBN 0-415-24025-5. xviii + 237pp. £13.99 (pbk), £45.00 (hbk)

A review by Lincoln Geraghty, University of Nottingham, UK

In a year which saw the box office success of *Spider-Man* (2002) and *The Two Towers* (2002) break all records and the long-awaited video release of *Harry Potter* (2001) and *The Lord of the Rings* (2001) corner the market, Matt Hills' book *Fan Cultures* appears not only to have been well timed but also a prerequisite in understanding the worldwide popularity of such cult texts. Both *Star Wars: Episode II* (2002) and *Star Trek Nemesis* (2002) provide more embellishments on their ever expanding narrative histories. Fans will either be pleased with what George Lucas has produced or angry that the film does not live up to expectations. Likewise, for those Trekkers already abuzz with enthusiasm after *Enterprise*'s debut season, Riker and Troi's wedding will be just what they have been waiting for. But why so much concern over what goes on in these forms of cult-media? Why do fans get so involved with the text? Hills convincingly succeeds in providing coherent and thought provoking explanations to such questions that the reader will be left in no doubt over how important the study of cult texts and their fans really is in today's increasingly fragmented society.

From the outset Hills differentiates between his own position as a scholar-fan and those of previous authors who have tried to achieve detailed analyses of fan activity by "ignoring the fan as subject," as a result Hills argues that earlier studies have neglected the "multi-dimensionality" of fandom (xiv). To avoid the inevitable restrictive nature of fan culture analysis he sets out to provide a more flexible view of fan relationships, both with their favourite texts and each other, not by looking at them as "good and bad" as in the work of Camille Bacon-Smith and Henry Jenkins but as "inescapable contradictions" which may not offer resolute solutions yet still highlight the connections between different fan groups (xiii).

With chapters in the first part of this book that view fan cultures between models such as "consumerism and resistance" and "fantasy and reality" Hills examines the various theories and methods academics have used to study fans. At the same time, he also tries to suggest problems with existing work and some possible alternatives which might provide a new platform from which a future generation of scholar-fans could begin their own investigations. Part two examines in closer detail how fans evolve beyond just being readers of texts and become performers, expanding upon their own lived experiences and reaching out into new spaces of cult-media such as fan tourism, cult geography, fan impersonation, and the Internet. One aspect of fan culture that Hills deals with is affect, specifically how fans' attachment to the text has been characterised by "love" and emotion. Because of this new development, fan psychology has to be taken seriously if a proper exploration of fandom can be achieved (22).

By way of introducing his book Hills summarises and comments upon the moral dualisms set up between the academic and cult fan, showing how both groups value their own "institutionally-supported ways of reading and writing" above the other (20). This, according

to Hills, creates a form of "mutual marginalisation" reliant on an imagined subjectivity (21). Ironically, but unsurprisingly, the difference between the scholar-fan and fan-scholar amounts to nothing more than a perception within their own fields that they are not "proper" academics or "real" fans. By the term scholar-fan Hills refers to academics who declare a fan identity and by fan-scholar he means fans who use "academic theorising within their writing" (2). At the heart of this oppositional relationship lies the most interesting hypothesis which Hills brings to light: Within the area of cultural studies, those academics who confess to also be fans do not recognize the position of the fan-scholar because they pose a threat to academic authority and expertise. As a reader who considers himself to be both an academic and a fan of a cult text this argument struck a cord since past experiences have shown there to be a divide between what certain academics think is important about fans and their relationship with the text and what some scholar-fans, such as myself, actually believe to be the fundamental truths about fandom and cult-media.

It is unfortunate that Hills could not expand upon this certain aspect of fan studies other than in two or three chapters. What might be interesting as a next step is to take account of the difference between academics in Britain and America and how cult texts in the latter form a significantly bigger part of university curricula, given that they place greater emphasis on the effect of cult-media on popular culture and that the very nature of intense affective fandom can be viewed as a particularly American identity. However, what *Fan Cultures* does provide is a sufficient basis for readers to embark on their own research of cult-media with an awareness of the power relationships within cultural studies and between academics and their subjects.

Film Music: Critical Approaches

By K. J. Donnelly (ed.)
Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001. ISBN 0-7486-1288-2. viii + 214 pp. £16.95 (pbk)

A review by Annette Davison, University of Leeds, UK

The study of soundtracks has been a growth market for some time now. Happily this rise has also, more recently, been matched by an increase in the number of scholarly articles and books on the subject. Donnelly's edited collection is a welcome addition to the field, addressing as it does a number of different analytical approaches to a diverse range of topics: from the role of electrical reproducers in British film exhibition to a discussion of the use of pop in the films of Quentin Tarantino.

The first two chapters of the book form something of a larger unit, "Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (I) and (II)". The first, by David Neumeyer and James Buhler, is an introduction to the analysis of film music outside of, or before, its relationship with the other elements of a film. This essay offers a useful summary of the ways in which "traditional" music analytic tools -- organised under such subheadings as "pitch relations", "style topics", and "timbre" -- can be brought to bear on film music, as a first stage of analysis. In chapter two, Buhler argues that when analysing film music, we not only need to do so in relation to the image track and the narrative, but also in relation to the other elements of the sound track. We should consider the soundtrack as a "musical" composition in its own right: a view which is rapidly gaining ground across the field more generally, following similar studies which focused on the work of individual soundtrack "auteurs" such as Jean-Luc Godard and David Lynch. A shift toward "soundscape" studies ought to further improve consideration of the collaborative nature of soundtrack composition and possibly urge an investigation of the different ways in which these creative relationships function and develop in different institutional contexts. It should also enable the field to move beyond the analysis of isolated film soundtracks and assist in locating them in the wider context of different genres and cinemas, and other cultural formations, for example. Robynn Stilwell's contribution to the volume -- an essay on the "soundscape" to *Closet Land* (1990) -- usefully offers an example of such an approach, in which she also considers the gendered discourse surrounding conceptions of "sound" and "subjectivity".

Issues of gender are also addressed by Peter Franklin in an interesting and ticklish chapter on Max Steiner's music to *King Kong* (1933). Franklin first highlights the binary oppositions around which the film -- and its music -- appear to be organised: with music and the construction of the feminine aligned with nature, primeval beasts and so on, as opposed to "rational man-as-conquering-film-maker" (92). Film music commentators have tended to reinforce such alignments (and certainly a strong case can be made for this in *Kong*, with Ann Darrow "sailing towards 'music' and 'femininity'" (94)). Drawing on the work of Andreas Huyssen and a range of gender theorists, however, Franklin suggests that the music might work to encourage a masculine subject-position, through its alignment with Kong rather than Ann. And further, that the music works to unmask -- as well as negotiate -- the film's

hegemonic masculinity, for not only can it be interpreted as presenting a "repressive construction of the 'feminine'", but also "male anxieties and fears" (100) of sexual threat.

Michael Allen's contribution focuses on the role of the electrical reproducer during the transition to sound in British cinemas (1927-29) and offers a fascinating and well-researched account of this little-discussed period in the history of film exhibition. Cinematic electrical reproducers comprised an electrical pick-up, two (or more) turntables with control panel (facilitating volume control of each turntable or mixing between them), an amp, and loudspeakers. Together, this enabled amplification not tied to the gramophone (and was thus able to avoid distortion). Reproducers were first used to provide musical interludes and prologues to films, and sometimes involved the mixing of live and recorded elements. With an accessible writing style and clear enthusiasm for the subject, Allen's chapter explores the rendering of sound and talking pictures UK audiences experienced before the full technology arrived.

Ken Garner's essay offers a categorisation of the choice and use of music in Tarantino's films -- music for main themes and scoring; for unselected, incidental diegetic music; diegetic music selected by characters -- highlighting the means by which music is foregrounded in each. A musicological approach is taken to the analysis of the pop used and its relationship to the narrative. This proves productive, though I found the discussion of "harmony and counterpoint" as terms to describe metaphorically the relationship between music and narrative perhaps too vague to be helpful. Nonetheless, this essay draws together a range of interesting approaches to the use of pop in these films and is certain to become a popular pedagogical tool.

On the whole this book does consider films and genres little discussed elsewhere. Donnelly's analysis of *Performance* (1970) draws attention to the heterogeneous musical elements that are combined to produce what he calls the "composite film score". Caryl Flinn explores the role of kitsch in a film from the New German Cinema -- Werner Schroeter's *The Bomber Pilot* (1970). Alfred Cochran takes a biographical approach to a study of Gail Kubik's output as a composer of music for documentaries. William Rosar considers the issue of musical influence in an analysis of Herrmann's Fate/ Power/ Destiny motif in *Citizen Kane* (1940). Thus this collection succeeds, partially at least, in its aim to explain some of the ways music has worked in films and in "'celebrating' the richness and diversity of music and the techniques that have appeared in them" (14). A wide range of material is covered here, though not all of the essays are equally good. In particular, not all of the articles stand up to the book's subtitle: critical approaches. However, it is rare for any collection to cover such a broad ground and despite some minor (though annoying) referencing discrepancies throughout, there is very definitely much that is good and useful here.

Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music

By Anahid Kassabian
New York and London: Routledge, 2001. ISBN 0-415-902854-0. x + 189 pp. £12.99 (pbk)

A review by David Sanjek, BMI Archives, USA

It should be a commonplace but unfortunately is not that motion pictures have never been silent. Even before the full-scale commercial exploitation of sound, films were rich with noise. We have always heard as well as watched motion pictures, yet the formal analysis of them has for far too long addressed the image at the expense of sound. Moreover, focus upon the musical accompaniment to motion pictures by scholars is a relatively new enterprise. *Composing For The Films* by Hanns Eisler and Theodor Adorno, the first extended discussion of the subject, was written some sixty years ago. Their focus upon film music at the moment of production isolates formal techniques that collectively comprise a set of standardized procedures. While Eisler and Adorno were the first to do so, they approached their subject from a position of cultural elitism. For them, the only kind of music worth its name is nonrepresentational in nature. Therefore, the use of leitmotifs as well as rudimentary harmonies and melodies by film composers results in material that, in their view, can be nothing more or less than functional. In the end, Eisler and Adorno lay out the groundwork of the subject only to condemn it or at best praise it with merely faint acclaim.

For several decades, few if any film scholars took up the analytic gauntlet Eisler and Adorno lay down. They were, in effect, deaf to the claims film music makes on audiences. Only recently, work by scholars such as Royal Brown (1992), Caryl Flinn (1992), Claudia Gorbman (1987), and Kathryn Kalinak (1992) added to the field of study these two men established yet rejected their knee-jerk condemnation of the classic Hollywood score. In the process, the work of composers such as Max Steiner and Bernard Herrmann was shown to possess a polish and substance equal to that of the Western classical cannon. At the same time, invaluable as this body of study has been, it too often fails to address the role of the audience in the reception of film music. The laws that these scholars uncovered at work in the classical Hollywood score were all too uniform in their effect upon the public. Few of these studies address in any detail how musical meaning can be plural in nature at the moment of reception. Most of all, little consideration is given to the body of experience and knowledge that the audience brings to their hearing of films, their considerable competence as regards to the various types of music featured in film scores and how they individually and distinctively convey meaning.

Anahid Kassabian's *Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music* is a valuable and long overdue intervention in this body of scholarship. She brings to the task abundant knowledge of film studies, formal musicology, popular music studies, semiology and audience analysis. In addition, her prose is deftly written and adroitly arranged to convey her polemical positions. Central to her argument, she energetically advocates for the role of the audience and their musical expertise in any study of how music

functions in motion pictures. She thoughtfully distinguishes between two kinds of identification possessed by the public when presented with film music. First, there is what she calls "assimilating identification," which occurs when a classic Hollywood score helps bring about a fairly rigid relationship between an audience and the film's content. In this context, a musical cue sets up a particular kind of response and commits the audience to that position and no other. On the other hand, compiled scores that incorporate disparate types of music and forms of performance solicit what she calls "affiliating identifications." This set of relationships between an audience and a film's score crucially depend upon the histories and forms of knowledge possessed by that audience. Those histories and forms of knowledge are mobilized by the audience in a variety of ways and therefore help bring about a variety of responses to the work at hand.

This latter concept is particularly valuable in the study of film music, for the compiled score has been more often denigrated than dignified. For many scholars and audience members, it comes across as a patently transparent vehicle on the part of entertainment conglomerates to use films to sell recordings. Kassabian calls attention to how such forms of scoring mobilize plural perspectives and permit audiences to adopt a variety of positions during the course of a single film. Her analyses of the use of such practices in films like *Dangerous Minds* (1995) and *Mississippi Masala* (1992) bring a whole new body of meanings to these works. At the same time, she illustrates how the classic Hollywood score can resist the free flow of audience identification. Her analysis of how principles of nationalism are embodied musically in thrillers like *The Hunt For Red October* (1990) and *Lethal Weapon 2* (1989) cogently draws upon a critique of political ideology that never loses touch with how systems of belief are active agents in people's lives. In the process, she compels us to recognize that belief systems can have their acoustic equivalents, our values cast into notes and rhythms as it were.

If I have any criticism of *Hearing Films: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music* it would be that Kassabian's study is the unique instance of a critical work that one wishes were longer. On occasion, she launches into a compelling reading only to pass onto yet another valuable observation without fully drawing out the complete resonance of the ideas she has lain before her reader. That aside, her work charts new ground for the study of both film and film music. Students and scholars of either field will profit from reading it.

Hollywood Spectatorship: Changing Perceptions of Cinema Audiences

By Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby (eds.)
London: British Film Institute, 2001. ISBN 0-85170-810-2. 8 illustrations, v + 168 pp. £15.99 (pbk)

A review by Stephen Harper, University of Glasgow, Crichton Campus, UK

Hollywood Spectatorship: Changing Perceptions of Cinema Audiences is the third edited volume on Hollywood audiences from Melvyn Stokes and Richard Maltby. As its punning subtitle suggests, this collection of essays by a diverse array of international contributors is concerned with the diachronic analysis of audience perceptions of Hollywood films and with the varying ways in which audiences have been figured in the history of reception theory.

Maltby's introduction offers a cogent historical survey of reception studies that will serve as a useful primer to those unfamiliar with the field. The introduction follows a familiar enough trajectory, ranging from Marx to Mulvey and Morley; it ends, less predictably, with a discussion of the work of Janet Staiger, whose 1992 book *Interpreting Films: Studies in the Historical Reception of American Cinema* provides the theoretical bearings for many of the essays in this collection. Staiger, of course, is best known for advancing an "historical materialist" approach to reception studies that eschews ethnographic research and psychoanalytical theory in favour of the historiographical investigation of contemporary reviews and commentaries.

The first part of the book contains essays on the reception of particular Hollywood films from a broadly historiographical perspective. Staiger's essay "Writing the History of American Film Reception" is the first offering. Many of Staiger's favourite themes are addressed in this essay, such as the dangers of positing "before and after" binary oppositions when discussing the history of film reception. Staiger shows, for example, that audiences were not talkative and "active" in the age of the silent movie and quiet and "passive" in the age of talkies. Staiger also emphasises the impossibility of mapping audience responses onto ethnic or class identities in any simple fashion.

Mark Jancovich follows Staiger with a discussion of the commercial promotion and critical reception of *The Silence of the Lambs*. Jancovich focuses less on audience reception than on genre -- in particular, the advertisers' careful attempts to promote a horror film for a mainstream audience. Here Bourdieu's concept of "distinction" serves as a framework for discussing the possibilities and limitations of this delicate negotiation. In a similar vein, Martin Shingler's study of the historical reception of *All About Eve* addresses the question of "sophistication" in film analysis, especially as this question relates to male and female reactions to the film. Shingler situates the film in the social and political (particularly feminist) discourses of the 1950s and documents its reception by gay audiences in later decades. Amy M. Davis's article "The Fall and Rise of *Fantasia*" also charts the shifting

fortunes of a classic movie, arguing that the film's initial box office failure owed more to a deficient marketing strategy than to American resistance to the movie's "high culture" credentials.

Gregory D. Black's contribution focuses on the attempts of the Catholic Church's Legion of Decency to certificate and censor films in the 1950s and 1960s. The essay is complemented well by the following one -- G. Tom Poe's study of the official discourses that sought to regulate the reception of Stanley Kramer's cold war chiller *On the Beach*. Both essays demonstrate well that Hollywood films are sites of ideological struggle, proving, as Poe puts it, that "hegemony is never as stable as institutional spectators hope, or some critical theorists fear" (101).

The second part of the book focuses on spectatorship theory. Beginning with a critique of Metz's classic text "The Imaginary Signifier", Jane M. Gaines offers a fascinating analysis of the young James Baldwin's identification with Bette Davis. Davis's bug-eyed "ugliness" came, argues Gaines, as a revelation to Baldwin:

> All the duplicty of adult society was exposed. No, it was not as they said -- that it was not possible to be rich and a movie star if you were ugly. It *was* possible to be white, rich, and ugly, or, rather, white, rich and black (110).

In a discussion that and has important conculsions for film theorists interested in issues of representation and "mirroring", Gaines convincingly shows how Baldwin constructed his identity as a black homosexual by appropriating the attributes of white female film stars.

The volume continues with articles by Gianluca Sergi and Barbara Klinger, who demonstrate how audiences' experiences of Hollywood films are changing through the introduction of, respectively, new sound technologies and new exhibition formats. The former has led to home spectators, in particular, becoming increasingly active and powerful -- "super-listeners", in Sergi's phrase. Klinger's focus is the newly empowered collector-as-connoisseur, who is primarily interested in collecting films for their performance on technically advanced exhibition technologies. According to Alain J. Cohen in the final article in this volume, these new conditions of spectatorship have led to the death of the traditional spectator of reception theory and the birth of the "hyper-spectator".

The quality of writing throughout this volume is generally high and the chapters are thoughtfully ordered to provide a level of thematic and methodological continuity hard to attain in collections of this scope. *Hollywood Spectatorship* is an important contribution to the study of Hollywood film and to the promotion of the increasingly important historical materialist strand of reception studies.

How to Read a Film: The World of Movies, Media, and Multimedia: Language, History, Theory. (Third Edition, Completely Revised and Expanded)

By James Monaco
Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. ISBN 0-19-503869-X. CCCLII
halftones + LXXIV diagrams + 672 pp. £16.99 (pbk)

A review by Stacy Gillis, University of Exeter, UK

A self-proclaimed expert on electronic publishing, film and the media industry, Monaco is
the president of the online service UNET (which publishes as Harbor Electronic Publishing).
He also founded the Baseline Company, the purpose of which is to provide information
services for the entertainment industry. His numerous film books aside, Monaco could be
regarded (and certainly regards himself) as a mini-industry within the worlds of film criticism
and publishing. He first published *How to Read a Film* in 1977 which quickly became (and
still is) the best-selling film book at Oxford University Press. He followed this success with,
amongst other publications, *The Connoisseur's Guide to the Movies* (1985), *The
Encyclopedia of Film* (1991) and the modestly-titled *The Movie Guide: Most Extensive and
Authoritative Single Volume Film Reference, Updated and Revised* (1995). A pattern emerges
of a critic who wishes to provide the absolute final word on cinema, sealing both its history
and its analysis in a tomb that can only be opened by himself.

Claiming to be the definitive source on film and media, *How to Read a Film* quickly became
a hugely popular book with undergraduates swotting up for their exams. It has been regarded
as the standard source for a generation. The text looks at film from a number of perspectives,
ranging from the technical to the historical, and could serve as a reference for both the film
historian and the production specialist. In essence, what Monaco attempts to do is to define
how a film conveys its meaning and *how* the audience assimilates that meaning. This should
be ringing alarm bells, for any viable critic or academic will shy away from this attempt to
pin an absolute meaning on a text, irretrievably fixed to the Monaco pinboard.

The assertion that the third edition is completely revised slightly stretches the truth. Chapters
One, Three and Five are essentially the same as the previous editions. Chapters Two and Four
have been updated whereas Chapter Six has been substantially rewritten. This edition varies
from the previous ones in that a chapter on "Multimedia: The Digital Revolution" has been
added in order to reflect recent developments in film production and technology. The
bibliography and chronology are twice as large as before. The glossary has been enlarged and
re-titled *The Dictionary of New Media*. The third edition is also accompanied by a DVD-
ROM multimedia version. This includes more than 130 film clips (adding up to over 400
hours of film), audio clips, author's notes and a searchable text of the book. It also includes
two other Monaco texts -- *Reading about Film* and *Reading about New Media*.

Monaco's presumably seductive (to undergraduates swotting up) broad strokes of film history could be forgiven if he managed to account for film theory. However, the bibliography points to Dudley Andrew's *The Major Film Theories* -- published in 1976 -- as "the best available one-volume introduction to film theory" (628). Christian Metz' semiotics of cinema may be referred to as "the most elaborate, subtle, and complex theory of film yet developed" -- neatly sidestepping the past thirty years of film theory -- but a reliance upon Monaco's account of semiotics is badly shaken when he erroneously sums up "structuralism, with its offspring, semiotics, 'as' a generalized worldview that uses the idea of language as its basic tool" (417). That structuralism and semiotics can be confused does not bode well for other theoretical readings.

Indeed, such a seminal text as Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975) does not even find a place in the bibliography, let alone in the discussion of gender politics. Making the difficult point that "the image of women in American film is a more complex issue," Monaco goes on to speciously argue that:

> the image of women in films of the thirties and forties, on the whole, was very nearly coequal with men. A sensitive feminist can detect numerous stereotypical limitations in the films of that period, it is true, but for most of us to compare the thirties in film with the sixties or seventies or eighties is to realize that despite the awakened consciousness of contemporary women, cinematically we have only recently regained the level of intelligence of the sexual politics of even the mid-thirties (270).

Forgive a sensitive feminist, but to neatly sweep away twenty-five years' study of gender and representation with an ahistorical comparison of the 1930s and the 1990s smacks of the critically inadequate. Monaco may be able to provide Old Testament-like genealogies of films in which the balance between women and men is shifting, but is unable to render a strategic reading of gender and the scopic.

The text has no footnotes and there are few references to film critics. And while Monaco is claiming to bring media criticism into the twenty-first century with a thorough discussion of topics such as virtual reality and cyberspace, the new chapter is largely taken up with a recital of technological innovation with no attempt to locate the way in which the consumer/viewer is positioned within hypertextual spaces. However, a chapter on multimedia may have seemed economically astute as an advertisement for the DVD-ROM version of the text.

Monaco claims that the inherent question of film politics is "how do we interrelate with films?" (275) but he makes the classic mistake of early film studies -- excusable in 1977 perhaps but not today -- in confusing theory with history and description with critical analysis. One is left with the distinct impression that this "completely revised and expanded" third edition varies little from the critically dubious original version. Undergraduates swotting for exams be warned!

Impossible Bodies: Femininity and Masculinity at the Movies

By Chris Holmlund
London: Routledge, 2002. ISBN 0-415-18576-9. 30 illustrations, xiii + 237pp. £13.99 (pbk), £45.00 (hbk)

A review by Rebecca Janicker, University of Nottingham, UK

A key tenet of *Impossible Bodies* by Chris Holmlund is the idea that cinema during the 1980s and 90s portrayed some on-screen bodies as "more 'proper', more 'natural', more 'common' than others" (4). Holmlund argues that bodies are "impossible" precisely because they do not fall within widespread conceptions of what constitutes "ideal" or "normal" physiques. Rather, they are accepted and admired because of what they have come to represent. Within the book, she seeks to demonstrate the ways in which the popular media of mainstream cinema and American television communicate and instil values within society, drawing attention to how the audience embraces these "impossible" bodies because they embody precisely what the audience does not. Holmlund explores three key categories of "impossible" bodies: the outrageous, e.g. Arnie's muscles, Dolly's breasts; the stereotypical, such as big Swedish males, lesbians; and the invisible, including Asians and Latina women.

The latter part of the text takes as its focus those issues raised by such famous bodies as those of Whoopi Goldberg, Clint Eastwood and Dolly Parton. Holmlund uses cinematic and cultural images associated with their bodies to address attitudes towards aging, inter-racial relationships and gender stereotypes within cinema. She draws on a wide range of films, encompassing the careers of this diverse collection of stars, to portray an image of contemporary attitudes to age, gender and ethnicity.

For example, the unusual way in which the outrageously "impossible" body of Dolly Parton provides appeal for such tangentially-opposed groups of people as feminists and traditionalists is discussed.

The mainstream "femme film" used femmes as central characters, whereby both lesbian and heterosexual audiences could identify with the images they portrayed, exploiting love scenes and lingering looks between the characters to be read as either "friendly" or "sexual", depending on the viewer. Holmlund argues that portrayals of lesbians are often conflated with images of acceptably heterosexual women, and that the categories of "feminine" and "woman" need to be defined with greater care than previously. In particular, "femmes" are shown to be potentially heterosexual characters "a lesbian, and especially a femme, is not a lesbian when there's a man around," whereas the genuine lesbians are sidelined as "butch" and rather unfeminine characters (40).

The cowboy character within *noveaux* westerns continues to represent a stereotype, lingering on as a predominantly macho, white character -- essentially a mainstream, acceptably action-

oriented "man's man". Holmund provides a useful analysis of how contemporary westerns typically omit such key categories of people as Asians, Asian Americans and children, who constituted a significant proportion of communities in the Old West, in favour of archetypal "Clint" clones. In this way, Hollywood perpetuates enduring stereotypical images of which bodies are (and are not) acceptable. Her brief nod to Freudian analysis with regard to the effect of age on the male psyche, and the resulting use of male sexuality in motion pictures, is interesting and could have been developed further.

The text provides a good case for the observation that the success of Latina actresses such as Rosie Perez and Jennifer Lopez is based primarily upon certain facets of their physicality and sexuality -- Rosie's lips and Jennifer's bottom -- which are enhanced to the extent that they continually form the basis of the characters they play. However, while there is plenty of evidence provided to show that use of these actresses in sustaining stereotypes has been largely negative, the argument may be seen as narrow by some. Holmlund herself mentions changes that have taken place in recent years, but offers little insight into reasons for the change and ways in which they have been realised. It would be useful to see an analysis of such changes in the portrayal of Latina actresses further developed. Furthermore, it is not always clear *why* Holmlund feels justified in selecting the particular examples she does. Sometimes descriptions of just one or two cases are relied excessively upon to make generalised arguments. This is particularly salient in the discussion of the role of Swedish actors in cinema where Nils Asther and Dolph Lundgren appear to be the only real examples of the so-called "trend" of Swedes playing other nationalities. Furthermore, stars previously discussed, such as Salma Hayek, are omitted from pertinent later discussions on the role of prominent Latina actresses in portraying stereotypes.

Overall, the main ideas are interesting and well-developed, the examples are illuminating and illustrative of the points made. Lively arguments persuade the reader to consider afresh the ways in which Hollywood forces us to perceive certain groups of people, and furthermore to accept its chosen stars as representative and justifiable exemplars of these groups. In conclusion, this book provides an entertaining and informative account of the ways in which cinema has shaped our views of ourselves and others via the use of so-called "impossible bodies" and their connotations.

Korean Broadcasting Institute Report 2001

By Korean Broadcasting Institute
(923-5 Mok-dong Yangchon-ku, Seoul 158-715, Korea). Seoul: KBI, 2001

A review by Jeongmee Kim, University of Nottingham, UK

The Korean Broadcasting Institute (KBI) has annually published *KBI Report* -- English version -- since 2000 in order to provide an insight into the Korean media industry for foreign academics and professionals. The second issue, *KBI Report 2001* contains eight papers: 1) A Study of the Public Interest for Digital Broadcasting Services by Hyechung Eun et al; 2) A Study of Balanced Development of Multi-media in the Forthcoming Digital Environment by Jong-gil Song et al; 3) A Study on Audience Behaviors with Television Rating Analysis by Ik-hee Kang et al; 4) A Study of Webcasting Contents in Korea by Kee-hyun Lee; 5) An Analysis of News Reports by KBS of the Inter-Korean Summit by Woo-seung Lee; 6) Towards a New North Korean Reporting Frame in Korean Television News by Chang-yun Joo; 7) A Study on the Cultural Interchange in Broadcasting between Korea and Japan by Yung-duk Kim et al; 8) Korean Broadcasting Statistics by Ho-young Kwon et al; The main focus of the KBI Reports can be divided into three subject areas: new media technology and its effect on the Korean media industry (1,2,4); recent political and cultural factors in the Korean media industry (5,6,7); and statistical data of the Korean media industry (3,8).

The KBI Report (2001) highlights the most up-to-date debates in the Korean media industry. The focus of these debates is on new media developments such as the Digital Broadcasting Services and Webcasting Contents. Because Digital Broadcasting Services is not actually active yet in Korea, the 2001 Report cannot show a clear blueprint of the forthcoming Digital Broadcasting era. Instead, the Report discusses the public role of digital broadcasting service in reference to media policy.

Two of the essays, "A Study of the Public Interest for Digital Broadcasting Services" and "A Study of Balanced Development of Multi-media in the Forthcoming Digital Environment," suggest that in shaping the new era of digital broadcasting services, the industry should put the interests of audiences at the top of their agenda. As digital technology is capable of providing numerous channels, the new era is expected to embrace the diverse interests of different audience group. However, the papers, to some extent, suggest general statement (the public interest), and fail to clarify what will be the public interest in the digital technology era. While two essays acknowledge the impact of the digital broadcasting service in the Korean media industry, they seem to acknowledge that it is too early to presume what the digital broadcasting service will bring to it.

In "A Study of Webcasting Contents in Korea", Kee-hyun Lee points out that webcasting programming in Korea is still at the stage of re-scheduling programmes from terrestrial broadcasting. He suggests that this stems from the fact that small Internet companies which do not have the financial support to create independent programmes for the webcasting, run most webcasting stations. On the other hand, some of the popular webcasting stations are run

by major broadcasting companies such as Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) running iMBC at www.iMBC.com or Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS) running SBSi at www.sbs.co.kr. While major broadcasting companies have relatively stable financial status, they refer to the webcasting as Internet broadcasting of terrestrial programmes rather than as an independent and creative station. Thus, he suggests the need for a clear definition of webcasting. While Lee does not provide any detailed analysis of small Internet companies, his report can be useful in predicting the forthcoming development of Korean webcasting culture.

The papers "An Analysis of News Reports by KBS of the Inter-Korean Summit" and "Towards a New North Korean Reporting Frame in Korean Television News" begin with the fact that the South Korean media attitude to North Korea has been gradually changed from negative to positive, in particular at the time of the Inter-Korean summit 2000. While Woo-seung Lee analyses only news on Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) between the Korean Prime Minister Summit, 1990, the Korean Summit 1994 and the Korean Summit 2000, Chang-yun Joo compares media attitudes of the three main broadcasting companies: KBS, MBC and SBS with North Korea before and after the Korean Summit 2000. The two reports include the implication of the media industry to the specific political situation of South Korea which is based on confrontation between South and North Korea. Furthermore, Joo notes in "Towards a New North Korean Reporting Frame in Korean Television News" the political implications of a transformation in the media's attitude to North Korea. While a positive media attitude is commonly regarded as advisable, Joo also points out that the recent positive media attitude to North Korea is based on "the nation-oriented frame for re-unification" (110). Positive news on North Korea at the time of the Korean Summit 2000 is dissociated from the idea of socio-political comparison or discrimination, which embodies the Cold War ideology. However, it becomes associated with only "ideological orientation for race integration" (110), having lost the ethical virtue of journalism (accuracy, balance, and neutrality).

"A Study on the Cultural Interchange in Broadcasting between Korea and Japan" reports personnel, products and inter-broadcasting interchanges between the two countries after the open-door policy of the Korean government to Japanese cultural products in June 2000. "A Study on Audience Behaviors with Television Rating Analysis" and "Korean Broadcasting Statistics" demonstrate statistical information on the Korean media industry and audiences.

Overall, the *Report* covers diverse issues of the Korean media industry at present and provides useful information on the Korean media industry. Given the acknowledgement of the *Report*, the 2001 *Report* is a useful source for foreign academics and media professionals who wish to explore the Korean media industry in either academic or practical terms. However, if they expanded it to analysis and discussion as well as statistical information, this would increase its validity and make it a unique source for media studies in Korea as well as abroad.

Keyframes: Popular Cinema and Cultural Studies

A review by David Inglis, University of Aberdeen, UK

One of the most striking developments in the humanities and social sciences over the last two decades or so has been the appearance of 'cultural studies'. Whether based in designated university departments, or through their spread into the practices of scholars in subjects as diverse as literary studies and anthropology, the themes and theories of cultural studies have become one of the most prominent features of academic activity in the contemporary university. What ramifications do these developments have for film studies?

This is the question addressed by the collection *Keyframes* edited by Matthew Tinkcom and Amy Villarejo. The aim of this book is to delineate some of the ways in which cultural studies forms of thinking can be productively employed within the study of film. The book comprises a long introductory section by the editors outlining some of the main themes of cultural studies thought, and twenty-one substantive chapters by different authors, on topics as diverse as violence in Bruce Lee films and gay icons in Bollywood. Each contribution is intended to show cultural studies forms of thought 'in action', by illustrating how such thought can be put to practical use within the study of particular films, genres, and modes of production and consumption. The chapters are divided up into four sections, respectively covering feminist and other representations of women in international film contexts, film stars, gay and lesbian studies, and forms of film production.

The book addresses itself to a question that will be of much interest to scholars in both film studies and cultural studies. The relationship between the two is complex, and one which needs elucidation and reflection. This is especially crucial as more and more young film studies scholars are being trained in terms of cultural studies forms of thinking. For making some attempt to put such questions on the agenda, encouraging scholars to reflect on their own practice and the nature of the disciplinary paradigms -- or shackles -- in which they are embedded, this volume is to be welcomed.

Nonetheless, despite having laudable intentions, the book is less than successful in meeting its stated aim of showing the effects, both already realised and potential, of cultural studies on film studies. This is firstly because, as with practically any edited collection of contributions from different authors, this book has the benefit of being quite diverse in its reach over a series of topics, but has at the same time the drawback of perhaps trying to cover too much ground within the space of one volume. Although all the individual contributions are interesting, it might have been a better idea to focus on fewer themes (for example, stars and gay and lesbian studies) so that a more detailed appreciation could have been given of the possibilities that cultural studies opens up for the study of film. Moreover, it is rather difficult

to ascertain in some of the substantive chapters precisely what their 'cultural studies' content is.

The book is also problematic in terms of its assumptions as to what cultural studies actually involves. The editors provide a useful summary of certain trends within cultural studies, but there are also important omissions. Besides a brief account of Marxian modes of analysis, it is the more 'postmodern' versions of cultural studies that get the most attention. Thus, for example, the very productive methods of the British culturalists, most notably Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart, get little substantive treatment, despite their having the advantage of an insistence upon relating production, textual, and reception elements of cultural life within a multidimensional cultural theory. It is the more 'textualist' versions of cultural studies that are mentioned here, thus undermining the editors' intention of illustrating how film studies scholars could think beyond film texts to grasp their place within socio-cultural worlds where films are made and viewed.

With its emphases on certain types of cultural studies over others, the book is marked by its own conditions of production: an approach to film studies rooted within the American academic context of literary studies. Given its subsidiary concern with thinking through globalising relations of film production and consumption, this limits its analytic grasp in favour of a rather narrowly North American conception of what both cultural studies and film studies are or could be. Nonetheless, it is still a useful resource for film studies scholars interested in critically reflecting upon some of the possible uses of cultural studies ways of thinking, and of reorienting their own practice accordingly.

The Movies as History: Visions of the Twentieth Century

By David W. Ellwood (ed.)
Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2000. ISBN 0-7509-2331-8. 42 illustrations,
x + 214 pp. £14.99 (pbk)

A review by Lincoln Geraghty, University of Nottingham, UK

The date 11th September 2001 will be forever etched into world history; the images seen
have become the defining symbol for the next generation of the new millennium. One of the
many indelible memories from that day is that every person interviewed described the
unfolding events as somehow unreal or make-believe. Almost all described the images of the
planes crashing into the towers as if they had come from a movie, it was as if Hollywood had
produced the greatest special effects show of all time and projected it onto the New York
skyline. What this seems to suggest is that movies are not only made of the "stuff of wonder"
but they are the means by which we understand the world, who we are, our place within it,
and how we describe history. Or, to quote the back cover of this book, "film has contributed
hugely to the way in which people imagine their own times." This is the premise at the heart
of Ellwood's collection of essays that review films in their historical and textual context. As
he points out, "this book is about films as sources of history" (1).

Ellwood is keen to point out the deep significance film has as a historical tool and his choice
of movie critiques reflects his urge to extrapolate the shifting "signs of the times" from some
of the century's most famous and acclaimed movies. The book is sectioned into four
categories: War Stories, Propaganda Cinema, Social Commentary on Screen, and Films of
Romance and Fantasy. Within these sections contributors have reviewed and analysed
twenty-one films from the last century that best demonstrate the connections between cinema
and society within a wide range of historical settings. Most of the films chosen to represent
cinema's lasting contribution to the twentieth century were produced and/or set in the years
1920-1960; other films such as *Star Wars* (1977) and *The Exorcist* (1973) exemplify lasting
mass-market appeal after having been resurrected in the late 1990s. However, what all the
chosen movies have in common, and therefore what makes this study a compelling insight
into the last century, is an acquired status over the years "as uniquely appropriate expressions
of the ideologies and national sentiments they set out to convey" (2).

It is no surprise that Ellwood positions war movies at the start of this work considering that
the twentieth century was the bloodiest and most violent of centuries, although his choice of
at least two of the films to represent this is a little tenuous: *Wings* (1927), *All Quite on the
Western Front* (1930), *Fires Were Started* (1943), *The Green Berets* (1968), and *Star Wars*.
For example, *The Green Berets*, and its analysis by Philip Taylor, is more in keeping with the
discussion on propaganda movies in the following section and ironically distort the picture
the reader gets concerning war and the way it has been represented and understood. Ellwood
describes the war film, as exemplified through his selection, as successful additions to the

creation of military and patriotic legend, so much so that they have become inseparable from the collective memory of the era's major conflicts (4). Yet in the case of *The Green Berets* one cannot help but be reminded that the controversy surrounding America's involvement in Vietnam was greater than the nation's patriotic response to the film and that later films such as *The Deer Hunter* (1978) and *Apocalypse Now!* (1978) highlighted America's lack of any sort of legendary wartime myth making as compared to the "myth of the war experience" (17) in *Wings* and the "myth of the People's War" (27) in *Fires Were Started*.

Star Wars too, although not strictly about war in the twentieth century, is miscast in this section as being the catalyst for the political rhetoric of the Reagan administration and the real "Star Wars" program in the 1980s. The real significance of the movie is lost thanks to the commentator's tying down of meanings in contrast to his earlier assertion that its success came from "the multiplicity of meanings" that could be extracted from its messages (2). Peter Krämer's piece on *Star Wars* would have been better placed, and better-directed, if it had appeared in the final section of the book concerning films of fantasy.

However, whether the reader is a keen cinema buff and film historian, or generally interested in movies as social representations, David Ellwood's addition to the film studies literary canon should be well received. He does provide scope with his collection of films and each review provides the right amount of detail to entice the reader to watch these great movies again and come up with their own opinions. It is a shame that the volume could not be stretched to include other important works such as *The Godfather* trilogy or Westerns such as *The Searchers* (1956) and *The Wild Bunch* (1969) that would provide their own panoramic and symbolic visions of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, this just emphasises the fact that the plethora of films produced really does provide the viewer with snippets of cinematic and cultural history, powerful enough to enlighten society but also intelligent enough to expose the dangers of the inaccurate representation of the past.

New Documentary: A Critical Introduction

By Stella Bruzzi
London and New York: Routledge, 2000. ISBN 0-415-18296-4. 7 illustrations, 199pp.
£12.99 (pbk)

A review by Heather Nunn, Middlesex University, UK

Stella Bruzzi's *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction* addresses contemporary non-fiction output in the 1980s and 1990s whilst also challenging some of the prevailing axioms of documentary critique and appraisal. Her analysis draws on theories of performance, performativity, authorship, gender, spectatorship and self-reflexivity. The accessible application of these terms to a broad range of contemporary productions recommends this as a provocative text that reclaims the adulterated 'truth' of documentary representation. Rather than being 'a critical introduction' New Documentary appeals to the student already schooled in generic and technological history through texts such as Kilborn and Izod's *An Introduction to Television Documentary: confronting reality* (1997) and Brian Winston's *Claiming the Real: the documentary film revisited* (1995).

New Documentary is divided into three parts: 'Ground rules', 'The legacy of direct cinema' and 'Performance'. Throughout, Bruzzi positions herself against the developmental model of documentary theorisation exemplified by Bill Nichols in which documentary falls into the five modes of expository, observational, interactive, reflexive and performative. She is concerned with the 'rigidity' of such 'theoretical orthodoxy', and attempts to rescue the maligned tools of voice-over and narration and highlight politically subversive uses of these techniques. Many documentary critics are well versed in the inevitable filmic manipulation of the real event. Nonetheless, Bruzzi contends, that even the most innovative of contemporary documentaries are still critically measured against a fetishised 'pure' capture of the real. One result being that the popular (such as docu-soaps) and the performative (such as the work of Broomfield, Dineen and Morris) remain under theorised. Her advocating of the contemporary documentary as a dialectical form is refreshing. Rather than hide 'truth' behind inverted commas she celebrates documentary truth as the knowing tension between fact and re-presentation; a praxis where complex political meanings arise from the compromise between a subject, recorder and spectator. Here, she attempts to reclaim the 'relaxed' engagement with the 'creative' treatment of 'actuality' exemplified by the early practitioners such as Grierson, the Soviets and Paul Rotha who embraced the contradictory reconstitution of reality.

Part I 'Ground rules' takes on idealised aspects of the documentary -- raw footage and the voice-over -- the well-worn target of docu-theorists and illustrates their potential for dialectical practice. Personal memory and public history are the conflicting terms that frame Bruzzi's analysis of authoritative and subversive documentaries. She critiques the canonisation of emotionally charged amateur footage of historical events such as the Zapruder home video of Kennedy's assassination and their use as 'raw' evidence. She contrasts this footage with de Antonio's *Rush to Judgement* (1966) which presents contradictory testimony from civilian witnesses to acknowledge the potential ambiguity of audiovisual evidence. This undermines documentary closure and reveals "a series of

truths…not a single underpinning truth" (20). Historical documentary series such as *World At War* or *The People's Century* draw on expert testimony, interviewee or voice-over guide to guide response to archival or newsreel material. In contrast, Bruzzi foregrounds Antonio's compilation work from *Point of Order* (1963) to *Mr Hoover and I* (1989) for its continuation of Soviet montage tradition wherein the editorial juxtaposition of archive material invites audience participation and gives Nixon, Patton and McCarthy enough rope by which to hang themselves. Here, as in other sections of *New Documentary,* the different forms and modes of address of television and film should have been signaled. For example, the use of to-camera testimony of ordinary witnesses traced from historical footage in series such as *The People's Century* deserved further exploration on the back of recent work by cultural historians on the politics of popular memory.

In Part II, the legacy of direct cinema is tracked to the new observational work of British television docu-soaps. Bruzzi discusses the now commonplace discrepancy between ideal and execution in direct cinema. Performance is a key term here extended to the hybrid TV docu-soap -- *Lakesiders*, *Hotel*, *Driving School* and *The Cruise* -- which observe their 'ordinary' subjects over extended periods but break the governing documentary 'discourse of sobriety' through melodramatic emphasis on institutional and personal crises. The self-conscious affiliation between filmmaker and star personas that develop in docu-soaps such as *The Cruise* acknowledges the artificiality of the filming set-up but problematically replaces a search for 'truth' with the intimacy of 'honesty'.

Performance is also central to Bruzzi's examination of the 'journey' film. Lanzmann's *Shoah* and Keiller's *London* are structured around either a shared theme or shared location, both charting the encounter or act of journeying rather than the push towards a fixed destination highlighted by Brian Winston as the 'chrono-logic' of Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* or Jennings' *Listen to Britain*. Bruzzi highlights the shared aggression and repression in these two very different texts. In contrast to Lanzmann's inconclusive roving camera, Keiller's series of static composed tripod shots of London define the city as the object of the voyeur, "familiar images" made strange "by the obsessively static, photographic gaze" (120). Lanzmann's masochistic quest for details of the Final Solution involves the sadistic coercion of survivors to speak the past: an enforced performance that challenges the assumption that performance necessitates fictionalisation. Nonetheless the Holocaust remains the repressed real behind these enforced memories. *London* pictures almost every mode of London transport, yet the physical journey of travel and motion remains the 'sensual and pleasurable' repressed of the collage of city images.

In Part III 'Performance', Bruzzi charts the trajectory of political documentaries of US presidents Nixon, Kennedy and Clinton. The direct cinema film *Primary* (1960) illustrates Kennedy's ease with the observational camera and his carefully displayed affinity with the media becomes the mark of his mythic political authenticity. In contrast the prolific television footage of Nixon, and his attempted construction of a media persona, become documentary material for the seeking out of the manipulative political performance, a process which increasingly preoccupies documentary treatment of the presidency. Bruzzi argues that the distinction between real and performed political persona is rendered redundant with Clinton and his publicly aired sexual and financial crises which illustrate the widespread public recognition of the political masquerade as a normative state of affairs.

Finally in the work of recent filmmakers such as Nick Broomfield, Molly Dineen, Michael Moore and the innovative TV series *Signs of the Times*, Bruzzi distinguishes the performative

documentary: most obvious in Broomfield's chaotic on-screen persona or Dineen's off-frame voice signifying archetypal intimate feminine concern. The dialectic between on-screen and off-screen persona foregrounds her central tenet: that filmic intervention, whilst necessarily a disruption of the real, does not invalidate the documentary.

New Patterns in Global Television: Peripheral Vision

By John Sinclair, Elizabeth Jacka, Stuart Cunningham (eds.)
Sinclair, Elizabeth Jacka and Stuart Cunningham. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
ISBN 0-19-871123-9. xii + 238 pp. £19.99 (pbk)

A review by Ragan Rhyne, New York University, USA

As the editors explain in their introduction, *New Patterns in Global Television* is primarily concerned with the tensions between local patterns of television and transnational exchange of media texts: "This book '…' outlines the local characteristics of the television industries of significant non-metropolitan countries that have built a presence outside their own borders" (23). Through a series of case studies, including Mexico, Brazil, India, Egypt, China, Canada and Australia, the collection of essays argues first that international television exportation is not limited to the "cultural imperialists" of the "first world," and second that the often competing interests of free-market trade and national cultural objectives engenders interesting and unique patterns of television programming.

Perhaps the most important contribution *New Patterns in Global Television* makes to global television studies is this unrelenting insistence that the United States is not the only loci of commercial television exportation, and that regional interests and politics often play a key role in the shape of national television industries. The collection locates geographical, political and linguistic affinities, which often resist the presumably homogenizing influence of US television programming and more significantly, its distribution networks.

The strongest essays, Paul Attallah's "Canadian Television Exports" and Stuart Cunningham and Elizabeth Jacka's "Australian Television in World Markets" explore not only patterns of import and export, but examine the ways in which cultural policies and market trends allow specific genres, aesthetics, and production patterns to develop. Canadian cultural production quotas, for instance, have encouraged international co-productions, while the small Australian television market and low-cost, high-quality Australian production infrastructure has situated the country as a center for international production.

Unpacking the national investments in these complicated negotiations, however, proves to be a weak point in many of the essays. In "Television in Greater China," for instance, Joseph Man Chan examines television policies in Mainland China, Taiwan, and colonially administrated Hong Kong. Chan recognizes diverse cultural policy in each region, however implies that commercial export is the primary goal in each case. In laying out Mainland China's cultural policy, Chan seems to argue that its policy has been shaped by a desire to contain its television industry within its borders a policy challenged by the industry itself. In his conclusion, he notes: "'…' China is urgently in need of a policy that will encourage internal competition, without which its industry will not be able to face the challenge from its two small neighbors" (155). While Chan is surely correct that China's policies will inhibit a serious challenge to Taiwan and Hong Kong's commercial successes, it seems that this

success is not the government's primary concern, at least according to his outline of the nation's cultural policy. In recognizing alternative loci for global television production, it seems crucial to also recognize alternative objectives for the industry as well.

On the whole, the collection of essays presents a key counter argument to the cultural imperialism model of globalization. With the recognition of rapidly growing export markets in Canada, Hong Kong, and Egypt, for instance, the authors reframe television as a local medium with an increasingly regional and global reach. That is, television does not merely flow from the United States to be passively received by audiences abroad but rather that local product and local policy is in a constant negotiation with transnational media conglomerates. With the drastic changes (such as the proliferation of satellite technology in South and Southeast Asia) that have certainly taken place in each of these markets since the book's publication in 1996, however, one should not look to *New Patterns in Global Television* for up-to-date statistics. Instead, the studies mark critical moments in global television history, which provide a crucial groundwork for the study of the cultural policy of television.

The Oxford Companion to Australian Film

By Brian McFarlane, Geoff Mayer and Ina Bertrand (eds.)
Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN 0-19-553797-1. xxi + 583pp. £35.00 (hbk)

A review by Julia Hammett-Jamart, University of Wollongong, Australia

The Oxford Companion to Australian Film is a large, impressively presented text, which draws heavily upon two earlier OUP publications: *Australian Film, 1900-1977* (Cooper and Pike, 1980); and *Australian Film, 1978-1994: A Survey of Theatrical Features* (Murray, ed., 1995); and the previous publications of the highly qualified editors. The intention of the editors is to present "a comprehensive one-volume companion to film in Australia" (viii). Whilst the objective is virtuous, at some point in the execution process, it seems to have been derailed. *The Companion* sits uneasily between genres. It resembles in part an anthology of essays/interviews and in part an encyclopaedia, without satisfactorily fulfilling the functions of either. Whilst the commissioned essays and interviews provide much stimulating material, the individual entries on key industry figures, which form the main body of the text, present numerous problems for this reader.

In the Preface, the editors note that, "no two people will draw up the same list, even from the same criteria" (viii). This disclaimer has no doubt been devised to deflect potential criticism regarding oversights in the list of entries. Bearing this in mind, I have not pursued an argument for the inclusion of titles and individuals *per-se*. However, it is difficult to overlook the lapses in internal logic which permit the inclusion of the film *Children of the Revolution*, whilst the film's director, Peter Duncan, is omitted.

Another example of editorial oversight concerns the lack of co-ordination between the entries and the appendices. Given that the only two appendices to the publication pertain to the Australian Film Institute Awards, it must be supposed that the editors consider AFI recipients to be significant to the project of describing Australian cinema. Notwithstanding, Rowan Woods, who won the 1999 award for Best Direction, is not afforded an entry in the body of the *Companion*.

Putting aside reservations about the absence of comprehensive cross-referencing, I focussed on the information contained within the existing entries. I was astounded to find that the numerous individual contributors, so vaunted on the cover sleeve of the publication, were often the authors of entries pertaining to themselves or their professional institutions. One example is the entry for the Australian Film Television and Radio School, which was written by the Chief Executive of the AFTRS, Rod Bishop. It would seem that the Victorian College of the Arts likewise provided their own entry for *The Companion*. Whilst an unorthodox practice, this approach might have worked if the editorial eye had remained attuned to possible conflict of interest. However, the overtly promotional tone of the above two entries suggests otherwise. For instance, the assertion that the VCA was "Australia's first film school" (518), is potentially misleading to the uninformed reader, who may not be aware that

Australia had no national film school until 1973, when the AFTRS was established by an Act of Parliament.

A similar inaccuracy can be found in a number of the entries for actors, which would appear to have been derived from the files of agents, without further verification. On more than one occasion the titles of short films have been incorrectly included with the list of feature credits. In some cases, working titles of films have not been updated to reflect their release titles.

Less in evidence but equally disconcerting is the flagrant subjectivity of entries. In this, they bear a closer resemblance to the columns of daily newspapers than to scholarly description. The entry on Nicole Kidman provides a pertinent example: "She…looked blondly stunning and entered into the spirit of Batman Forever" (250); or regarding Steve Vidler: "He brings a disarming and deceptive casualness to these roles that makes him a performer to watch". (519)

In consideration of these problems, one is led to question the source of the information for entries. In their ensemble, they resemble an abridged version of the industry production catalogue 'Encore'. To that has been added the personal insights of 'almost a hundred scholars and writers', not all of which are scholarly or edifying.

The most satisfying aspect of the publication is unquestionably the essays and interviews, which were specially commissioned for *The Companion* and represent a more consistent source of historical information and reflection. I would, however, query the headings under which individual texts have been indexed. Information about the Royal Commission into the Moving Picture Industry, for instance, can be found under 'Cultural Policy'; no entry exists under 'Period Films', but the subject is discussed to an extent under 'Maternal Images' and 'Mateship'. I did wonder, too, at the eclectic selection of interview subjects and at the accompanying full-page photos, which seem to claim an inordinate amount of space.

In consideration of the above deficiencies, *The Companion* should not be treated as a highly reliable source of detailed information about the Australian film industry. It might rather be used as a first point of reference for information, which can then be cross-referenced against more accurate sources. In this respect, it fulfils its claim of providing "a sense of the sweep of cinema in Australia". In its conception, the book is promising and timely. Unfortunately, all the indications are that it has been put together in haste. It can only be hoped that what undoubtedly began as a good idea will see its successful realisation in a later edition.

Picturing Culture: Explorations of Film and Anthropology

By Jay Ruby
Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2000. ISBN 0-2267-3099-9. xiii + 339pp.
£13.00 (pbk)

A review by David Murray, University of Nottingham, UK

This book presents a strongly argued case for the importance of an anthropological cinema from a leading figure in the field over many years. In its wide range of materials and its shrewd and authoritative account of recent debates it will be useful to anyone wanting a lively and engaged introduction to the issues, as well as provocative to those already involved.

The first crucial task of ground-clearing that Ruby sets himself is to separate out his idea of anthropologically informed film from the common assumption that it is "a documentary about exotic people." For him, most existing ethnographic and documentary film has only a marginal relation to anthropology and in fact these forms are "actually an impediment to the development of an anthropological cinema" (2). The problem is the assumption that ethnographic film is concerned with objective documentation, and that realism is the best, indeed inevitable, way of achieving this. Ruby rightly insists that much recent work in cultural studies has set up an outdated picture of the anthropologist, and has then castigated this straw man for positivism, and a lack of reflexivity. As he points out self-critiques within anthropology (in the work of Stanley Diamond, Dell Hymes), as well as in his own edited collection of 1982, *A Crack in the Mirror*, preceded the critiques of George Marcus and James Clifford later in the 1980s which are the basis of many of the recent discussions in cultural studies.

While sympathetic to these recent critiques, then, Ruby is unconvinced by the alternatives from outside anthropology, and is fairly dismissive of the arguments of Fatimah Rony and Trinh T. Minh-ha. His aim -- and he admits it is an ideal far from actualisation -- is a visual anthropology in which ethnographic films are made by anthropologists and subjected to the same professional standards as other ethnographic work (like the amount and standards of fieldwork, for instance). This would also mean they would reflect genuine anthropological questions and methodologies and would not be dominated by the documentary role which condemns most so called ethnographic film to illustrative and teaching purposes.

Ethnographic filmmaking, then, "should be the exclusive province of anthropologists making pictorial ethnographies" (239). It is important to emphasise, though, that in staking such starkly territorial and professional claims he is assuming that a truly anthropological approach would involve the use of film in ways that were truly reflexive about the ethnography and the role of the visual within it, and would entail taking into full account the experiments within film form by creative artists. In this way Ruby's ideal conditions would rescue anthropology from uncritical documentary impulses, but it would also release an area of film-making from

commercial and audience pressures towards uniformity, since he envisages a small but firmly supported and supportive network of professionals. (In this he differs from Bill Nicholls who prefers to trust the film-makers for innovation and creativity than the anthropologists).

After the punchy position-paper of the first chapter Ruby goes on to look at the work of some early American ethnographic films, beginning with the undeveloped photographic explorations by Boas and his students and going on to Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*. This work, of course, falls short of his expectations, as does the work of a more recent film-maker, Robert Gardner, whose work *Dead Birds* is discussed, but Ruby is at pains not simply to dismiss these efforts. In the work of Tim Asch to whom he devotes a chapter based on interviews he conducted with him, Ruby finds important innovations, specifically in his films of the Yanomani with Napoleon Chagnon. (His concern is with the editing of the films, and he doesn't touch upon the recently controversial issue of Chagnon's effects on the Yanomani).

After these specific instances of failures and promising starts Ruby devotes the second half of the book to more wide-ranging discussions of -- in successive chapters -- reflexivity, reception and the ethical position of the film-maker. In the course of this he explains why the present market and distribution system has led to an emphasis on documentary rather than the sort of film he wants, and to a marginalisation of those works which have opened up promising avenues, like the work of Jean Rouch in France, Eric Michaels in Australia (to whom he devotes a final chapter) and David and Judith McDougall in the US. The chapter on ethics, 'Speaking for, Speaking about, Speaking with, or Speaking Alongside' is a probing account of the ways in which the well-documented 'crisis of representation' has affected anthropology. Ruby asks, for instance, whether 'informed consent' can be meaningful in a situation of unequal power, where there is an unequal understanding of and access to the means of representation, whether this is writing or film. Giving wider access to the means of representation, in this case film, will also affect the forms of the medium itself (small-scale production and distribution, as well as radically different orientations of subject-matter, for instance), and he refers to Eric Michaels in Australia, and to the pioneering work of Adair and Worth to enable Navajo to make films themselves. From them he also takes one of the opening epigraphs to his book, which illustrates the need for self-reflexivity. In it an elderly Navajo shepherd, told about the filming to take place skeptically asks if it will hurt the sheep. Reassured that it will not, he then asks whether it will do the sheep any good. "Worth was forced to reply that as far as he knew making movies wouldn't do the sheep any good. Sam thought this over, then, looking over at us he said 'Then why make movies?' Sam Yazzie's question keeps haunting us."

Political Film: The Dialectics of Third Cinema

By Mike Wayne
London: Pluto Press, 2001. ISBN 0-7453-1669-7. ix + 163 pp. £14.99 (pbk)

A review by Martin Stollery, Southampton Institute, UK

This book attempts to rescue debates about Third Cinema from "the internment of the past" and extend their applicability (112). It proposes a provocatively counter-hegemonic challenge to "the more ivory-towered paradigms within film studies" (7). Therefore postcolonial theory is critiqued as an approach which eschews the committed judgement of particular films' political affectivity this book advocates. Instead *Political Film* devotes a chapter to updating older debates about politics and aesthetics. It carefully explores similarities and differences between Third Cinema and Marxist modernist precursors such as Soviet montage cinema, Brecht, Benjamin and (less modernist but still pertinent) Lukács on typicality and totality. Arising from many years experience teaching Third Cinema in British higher education Wayne's book's immediate concern is to enable new approaches to teaching and conceptualising a hitherto marginal area of film studies. It also declares its development of Third Cinema theory a "'holding operation' in the dark times of neo-liberalism's hegemony," worth pursuing in the hope it might eventually inform film making practice in future more revolutionary conjunctures (8). Whether this happens time will tell. What can be assessed now are the implications of Wayne's intervention for academic film studies.

From the sketchy, schematic account of First and Second Cinema in Solanas and Getino's classic Third Cinema manifesto Wayne extrapolates a critical practice suitable for analysing a wide range of film production. The relationship between First, Second and Third Cinema is not conceived in terms of discrete categories but rather as an ongoing dialectical one. Wayne explores in detail how Third Cinema can transform as well as differ from aspects of First and Second Cinema to further its aims. One example is the politically radical reworking of elements of the Hollywood film musical in *Dollar Mambo* (Paul Leduc, 1993). Similarly there is an exploration of how films leaning towards Third Cinema such as *The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1965) can be pulled back into the ambit of First and Second Cinema, in this case through inadequate historicisation, inattention to the processes whereby people become politicised, and low-key rather than fully critical and analytical commitment to the Algerian independence struggle.

Political Film's other specific points of interest include the surprising claim that *Evita* (Alan Parker, 1996) can be seen as an example of Third Cinema and the contrast between *Amistad*'s (Steven Spielberg, 1997) and *The Last Supper*'s (Tomàs Gutiérrez Alea, 1976) treatments of slavery. The most original chapter utilises Hobsbawn's writing on the bandit to analyse the Second Cinema films *Eskiya* (Yavuz Turgul, 1997), *Bandit Queen* (Shekhar Kapur, 1994) and *The General* (John Boorman, 1998). The argument here is that in Second Cinema bandits are represented as Romantic icons poised midway between First Cinema's capitalist-assimilationist gangsters and Third Cinema's lucidly analytical explorations of mass revolt.

In the final chapter Solanas and Getino's manifesto is reassessed for its contemporary relevance. Wayne's analysis stages an implicit rapprochement between the manifesto's blanket hostility towards First Cinema and certain tenets of cultural studies: "The crucial category missing from Solanas and Getino's essay is utopianism: the way popular culture draws on authentic feelings and desires for a life better than the here and now. Once we construct a model that allows First Cinema to be more contradictory than Solanas and Getino allow for here, then First Cinema also becomes a potential resource for Third Cinema" (124). Traditional cultural studies analysis locates the presence of utopianism within popular culture. Wayne's argument, derived from teaching a module "structured around a passage through First, Second and Third Cinema," identifies Third Cinema, in the broadest sense, as cinema which politicises and points towards the realisation of utopian sentiments acknowledged and suppressed within popular culture (ix). This approach emphasises the importance of emotional engagement in Third Cinema. It also opens a path students can follow from immersion in First and perhaps a smattering of Second to meaningful and even pleasurable engagement with Third Cinema. It is a straightforward yet canny pedagogic strategy. Examples of First and Second Cinema discussed in the book are topical enough to spark interest in their links and contrasts with Third Cinema.

Although effective as a way of expanding the range of cinema students in Western higher educational contexts are exposed to, and relating political debate to films they are familiar with, there are potential drawbacks to this approach. Wayne states clearly at the outset that Third Cinema is of course not the same as the much larger category of Third World Cinema. Nevertheless most of the actual examples of Third Cinema are Third World films and all of the First Cinema discussed in the book is from the First World. What this squeezes out of sight is popular cinema and patterns of exhibition in the Third World. There is a growing body of work in this area, Walter Armbrust *Mass Culture and Modernism in Egypt* (1996) and Jonathon Haynes ed., *Nigerian Video Films* (2000) being two notable examples.

Even if one retains the identification and evaluation of First, Second and Third Cinema as the ultimate goal, taking this work into account adds precision to the critical process, minimises the possibility of Eurocentric readings, and maps the terrain film makers aspiring to make radical socialist interventions into their national or regional film cultures have to negotiate. It is important, for example, to know something about Egyptian popular cinema in order to assess the radicalism of Youssef Chahine's allegorical films *L'Émigré* (1994) and *Destiny* (1997). They appear more radical and their allegorical dimensions more evident when placed against other 1990s Egyptian films dealing with fundamentalism, terrorism, political leadership and the distribution of economic resources than when viewed outside this context. Similarly, although it could all in the final analysis be categorised as First Cinema, it is surely important to be aware that the recent Nigerian video film production boom has extended audovisual culture into domestic spaces occupied by women, divides along ethnic lines, and that the consumption of Hollywood as opposed to Nigerian videos tends to mark out class distinctions.

Political Film's concluding analysis of *The Elephant and the Bicycle* (Juan Carlos Tabio, 1995) is the book's best discussion of an individual film precisely because it places it in relation to Cuban film culture and exhibition patterns as well as extrapolating its more universal significance. The sensitivity to specific contexts implicit here could have been made more explicit in the book's theoretical sections to concretise the non-schematic but still at times slightly abstract discussion of the dialectical relationships between First, Second and Third Cinema.

Perhaps because Espinosa's notion of 'Imperfect Cinema' is discussed in some detail in Wayne's previous book *Theorising Video Practice* (1997) *Political Film* does not include any exploration of the opportunities afforded or challenges posed by new technologies. Does the availability of inexpensive digital technology establish the preconditions for a new type of Third audiovisual practice? Solanas and Getino's enthusiasm for the advances in 1960s filmmaking technology which made their film *The Hour of the Furnaces* (1968) possible is one aspect of their manifesto Wayne's reassessment of this founding text neglects. Does new technology once again give reason to be enthusiastic or should claims about digital's liberatory potential be treated with caution? It might be that these current debates are not entered into because, rather than miring it too deeply in present contingencies, *Political Film* is essentially a book about critically retrieving Third Cinema from "the internment of the past" and making it available for a possible future. Its final sentence is less concerned with summarising where exactly we are now than with challenging the reader, in true Third Cinema style, with the question "What will we do?" (156).

Post-War Cinema and Modernity: A Film Reader

By John Orr and Olga Taxidou (eds.)
Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000. ISBN 0-7486-1281-5. 8 illustrations, ix + 439pp. £18.95 (pbk), £50.00 (hbk)

A review by Richard Armstrong, BFI Associate Tutor, UK

The journey that cinema took in the second half of the last century led from the wide-eyed revelation of experience to be found in Italian Neo-Realism to an ever more fragmented and often fraught scrutiny of the protagonist's point-of-view. A David Lynch or an Atom Egoyan would have been unthinkable in 1945, just as a Rossellini or a DeSica would have been in 1995. Post-war cinema mounted a philosophical and aesthetic challenge to traditional realisms that interrogated the very grounds on which the perception of experience had been based. Whilst the closing shot of the children from *Rome, Open City* (Rossellini, 1945), which appears on this book's cover, is dominated by the actual Roman skyline, among the films discussed here, the Los Angeles of *Lady in the Lake* (Montgomery, 1946), the Tokyo of *Tokyo Story* (Ozu, 1953), and the Ravenna of *The Red Desert* (Antonioni, 1964), are products of the play of aesthetics and consciousness.

Issues around subjectivity are key to the theory and practice of cinema since 1945. This collection opens with Andre Bazin's survey of the "Italian School of the Liberation." Published during that first flush of excitement in the late-1940s over the discovery of life outside the studio gates, returning to this piece after the fractured and murky perspectives of the rest of the book feels like a breath of fresh air. Pasolini's "The Cinema of Poetry" is the jumping-off point for Orr's 1998 collection "Contemporary Cinema." By 1965, when Pasolini gave this paper, he felt emerging a poetic sensibility, a "free indirect discourse", in which a filmmaker such as Antonioni or Godard substitutes for the objective realism of classical and neo-realist practices the skewered and neurotic subjectivities of their protagonists. The ontology of the object articulated in Bazin's championing the revelation of real space was replaced by ontologies of the image. Pasolini saw the rise of such subjectivist aesthetics as symptomatic of a bourgeoisie in crisis in the Cold War period. This essay is key for identifying the air of revolution immanent in 1960s cinema. But subsequent trends have shown that western bourgeois auteurs and neurosis don't necessarily go together, as Orr points out in the Introduction. 'Cinemas of poetry' have appeared from Tarkovsky and Kieslowski under Communism. Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou more recently. Difference engenders 'poetic' cinemas. Women protagonists from Giuliana (*The Red Desert*) and Marnie in Hitchcock's 1964 film, to those in subsequent works by Varda and Wajda neurotically ignore as a strategy for resisting patriarchy. Ada in the pop arthouse classic *The Piano* (Campion, 1993) shows how respectable modernist experiment has now become. Psychotic male subjectivities hailing from beyond the bourgeoisie characterize such as *Badlands* (Malick, 1974), *Raging Bull* (Scorsese, 1980) and *Naked* (Leigh, 1993).

Metz's "The Modern Cinema and Narrativity" (collected in 1974) challenged Pasolini's and others' assumption that 1960s modernism had done for narrative, seeing modernist characteristics in early cinema and finding in an apparently non-diegetic episode from *Pierrot le fou* (Godard, 1965) a re-thinking of narrative. Orr encourages you to sample a later clash between Tarkovsky and Deleuze over the related issue of duration. In an extract from his memoir "Sculpting in Time", Tarkovsky argues in favour of editing as a means of preserving rhythms implicit in the spirit of the film as shot. In this view, the sequence shot is essential to the integrity of cinematic time. Orr reads Tarkovsky's position as a riposte to the selective amnesia of post-war Soviet politics.

By contrast, Deleuze stresses the falsity of time in the cinema. As opposed to the sensory-motor mechanics that integrated situation and action in the classical "movement-image", he sees a modernist "time-image" of pure optical and sonic signs. Evoking the potency of song and a circular structure which Deleuze terms the "bal(l)lade", he stresses, after Nietzsche, the recurrence of the past in the present, recalling Welles, Resnais and, more recently, films by Roeg and Egoyan. Upsetting the classic textbook binary -- Lumiere vs. Melies -- realism and fantasy become indissoluble in modern cinema.

J.P. Telotte on voice-over narration in film noir catches the emergence of subjectivity as a subversion of classical Hollywood narration from within. Telotte interestingly evokes the disorientations of film noir as film and generic tag by invoking Foucault's identification of discourses surrounding madness. Such disorientations are echoed in Welles' *Touch of Evil* (1958) in which, for Terry Comito, "Welles' 'Mexico' is a place of the soul, a nightmare from which a lost Hollywood sweater girl begs, mostly in vain, to be awakened."

Section Two features pieces ranging from Laura Mulvey's on the "hieroglyphics" of African cinema to Tania Modleski's account of Hollywood masculinity in crisis in *Vertigo* (Hitchcock, 1958). As Modleski sees it, Scottie's inability to come to terms with Judy's status as agent jeopardizes the objectivity of the entire classical tradition. *Vertigo* reveals classical Hollywood's allegiance to the male gaze and foregrounds a pathology endemic in 1960s cinema, a time in which, for Colin McCabe in his account of the *Performance Shoot* (Roeg, 1970), "representation came under attack."

In Orr's view, film criticism is a melting pot of aesthetics, ontology, history, sociology and more. This would seem to reflect a wealth of contemporary watching and commenting in a context in which, thanks to video and DVD, I can watch whenever I like. A number of these writers -- Bazin, Sontag, Fredric Jameson, Nestor Almendros -- wrote on film history as it was happening, and drew upon wide-ranging disciplines. If Bazin's championing the object in the image over the image of the object hinted at a divinely guaranteed and self-evident world, in 1966, Godard famously said: "*Film* is truth, 24 times a second." Keep this collection in a bookcase near the VCR.

Finally, the proofing is awful. Among a myriad misprints, *Tokyo Story*'s release is cited as 1948 when it was 1953. David Jarrat should read David Farrar. Last, but by no means least, Modleski's entry was derived from *The Women Who Knew Too Much* (1988), not *The Woman Who Knew Too Much* (1998).

Reading Hollywood: Spaces and Meanings in American Film

By Deborah Thomas
London: Wallflower, 2001. ISBN 1-9033-6401-9. 144pp. £14.99 (pbk)

A review by Sarah Heaton, University of Manchester, UK

What I found particularly appealing about this book was the equally developed breadth and depth to the interpretation of film and space. Film space is self-consciously loaded with meaning and is manufactured to be read in detail. Deborah Thomas captures the reach of the broader perspective taking account of the quintessentially American spaces of her chosen films. The west and small-town America intimates not only the dialectics of space, but also how this reflects particular American consciousness. Thomas's close-up makes enquiries about that other peculiarly American space, the Hollywood Studio System and its set designs. The book aligns itself closely to concepts of constructed, mediated space that occurs at every level of film making, rather than simply the representation of spaces.

Thomas examines the details of décor to ascertain their symbolic positioning. She considers the use of space in the set design that is both literal and metaphorical. Features of rooms are shown to re-orientate conceptions of space, not simply within a particular scene, but extending their significance through the entire film. An object on the wall in the first scene may not be seen again, but its significance lingers. Thomas shows the decorative to challenge and undermine the firmness of category and border. The next level of spatial significance is the actor's body in space, the actor's dimensions and negotiation of space, and the filmmakers' ability to represent a movement through space. To comprehend space one needs to move through spaces, the acting body is therefore the site of transference between the viewer and the actual site of the film. Space is also created and manipulated by the camera eye. Interestingly the book makes it apparent that film technique has a dialectical relationship with the tectonics of building. Architecture acknowledges the specular and blind space that buildings necessarily have, and Thomas's interpretation of film technique acknowledges a similar regard for the specular and blind space in filmmaking. Rather than perceiving isolated facades, space in film and architecture unfolds. Finally, Thomas moves her reading out into the audience's space.

Thomas considers how the narrative of space is used as an adjunct to character and action revealing an unspoken narrative to the role of space. The successful discussion of literal boundaries and surfaces in *My Darling Clementine* (1946) analyses mirrors, windows, doorways, curtains and the use of light and dark. There is fluidity to all these tropes of transgression. All these sites of spatial slippage focus on both the disruptive, with the smashing of the mirror, and harmony when reflections melt into a complete whole. To reinforce the readers' perceptions of spatial slippage Thomas gives a close schematic analysis of several paralleling scenes. The reading of repetition and difference creates dialogue between those scenes, so that boundaries are repeatedly crossed. For instance, the mirrors intimate transgressions at the architectural edge, which open up meanings to depict the

violation of the clear boundaries of character. These close textual details ground any indeterminacy that might arise out of a spatial analysis that points to transgression, transparency and slippage.

Thomas set the precedent for her analysis of spatial transgression with the glass cases of butterflies in *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). In a broader perspective Thomas analyses small town America in *All I Desire* (1953) and the spatial transgressions between public and private space. The literal spaces reflect back upon the thematic, indicating how social constructions define and flout space. The influence of the city on the west has a similar intimation of fragmentary and mobile space in the transgression of clearly known and defined borders as the west extends its boundaries. A highlight is the reading of Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958) that points to spatial slippage in the distinctions between the audience, actors and the framing of the scene in the discussion of diegetic and non-diegetic movement through space. Account is taken of spatial positioning of the actors, the camera, the three different sets, the audiences perceptions and the space of the narrative, all the while considering the junction with time.

Thomas uses the portrayal and projection of space as an entry point into the films rather than an analysis of space *per se*. She indicates how new modes of analysis can offer alternative readings that are active and open. Importantly her reading determines a fluid and mobile interpretation despite the perhaps expected fixity of meaning in an over constructed Hollywood. Because the book is not overtly theoretically impelled by recent debates surrounding the occupation and negotiation of space, it avoids inaccessibility despite being clearly influenced by such theoretical maneuvers. This makes the book a highly readable introduction to some extremely complex levels of spatial interpretation. Not only is this book an excellent introduction to the Hollywood Studio System as well as methods and levels of film interpretation, but it is also a book from which highly developed discussions of spatial analysis can stem, opening up a route into and understanding of more theoretical based texts.

Retrovisions: Reinventing the Past in Film and Fiction

By Deborah Cartmell, I.Q. Hunter, and Imelda Whelehan (eds.)
London: Pluto Press, 2001. ISBN 0-7453-1578-X. viii + 168 pp. £15.70 (pbk)

A review by Lincoln Geraghty, University of Nottingham, UK

According to Sarah Neely, one of the contributors to this volume, a "retrovision is a 'vision into or of the past' and implies an act of possessing the ability to read the past, in the way that one would possess a prophetic vision" (74). As a result of their retrospective glancing into the past from the present, retrovisions entail a "reinterpretation" or "revisioning" of history. This is something that not only characterises and links together the films analysed in *Retrovisions*' essays but also the very reconstruction of the past and its counter-myths as part of a postmodern investigation. In essence, the films discussed in this book are "makeovers of history" as well as symbols of the current conflict between "reality" and "representation" identified by Cartmell et al. as "very much alive in lit. crit. circles" today (7).

Of the eleven chapters in *Retrovisions* over half discuss how Shakespeare's work has been adapted by Hollywood to suit an ever-changing movie market that demands new inspiration. Films such as *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), *Elizabeth* (1998) and Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* (1996) are not only evidence to the fact Hollywood is consistently re-appropriating historical and canonical texts to authenticate its movies but are also evidence "of a culture's obsession with looking back" (74). Updating Shakespeare, as Elizabeth Klett points out in her essay, not only reinvents him for a new audience but also allows those less familiar with his persona and work to be included in what is often seen as an elite group who have the cultural capital to understand his plays -- or just know when to laugh at the right time! *Shakespeare in Love* appealed to the widest possible audience, even with the myriad of in-jokes and quotes, because it did not attempt to define the real Shakespeare but instead created an authentic, heterosexual, passionate, sexy, and funny Shakespeare, "reborn as the culturally accessible icon" for our age (37).

The editors point out early in the introduction that the book is dominated by films about the Renaissance and Jacobean period in British history, a result of the keen interest in Elizabeth I and Shakespeare. They attribute part of this burst of interest to the British desire to review history "in the wake of new definitions of Britishness." In conjunction with this comes the need to rethink the "meaning of Englishness in a devolved nation" (3). Altogether these concerns for a new identity come on the back of major constitutional and cultural upheavals, most notably the dying popularity of the monarchy in Britain accentuated by the Queen's '*annus horribilis*' in 1992 and the death of Princess Diana in 1997. Kara McKechnie's contribution on *The Madness of King George* (1994) and *Mrs Brown* (1997) outlines their treatment of such royal crises and concludes that although they draw attention to the faltering position of the monarchy in Britain, and suggest that it has become redundant, they never really invite the audience to think that constitutional changes should occur. Compassion for

both George III and Victoria as people rather than rulers has outweighed any sense of political reaction to these films and is indicative of a traditional anxiety toward change that characterises British history films.

However, *Retrovisions* only half rationalises Hollywood's penchant for "looking back" at the past by revisioning literature and history. Another reason can be ascribed to the recent "post-millennial confusion" so rife in our society and symbolised in part by events such as the Y2K fiasco and the emotional fallout from the terrorist atrocities in New York. This international insecurity at the start of a new millennium does not come out as strongly in the book as do the analyses of the battle between reality and representation. Yet as readers we should remember that the films discussed are not the only films that "retrovision" history and literature and they certainly will not be the last. Hollywood is responding to people's fear of the future by investing more in historic films because it sees a cause to be fought for, and, perhaps more interestingly, because it sees a profit to be made. Capitalising on the current social malaise not only means a boom in other areas such as myth, legend, and the heroes of Ancient Greece and Elizabethan England but also provides a cultural tonic for a world in need of an optimistic future prognosis. Like Shakespeare and Austen, other classics brought to the big screen will enable moviegoers to rediscover the more innocent "youth of mankind" as well as give them the opportunity to revise and demythologise history.

There is no doubt that the popular use of history to make blockbusters will increase, especially since this is becoming the "preferred method of access for the public outside the universities" (3). Nevertheless, bringing about a popular turn in glamorising history in film does pose many questions over the validity of the sources used as the basis for stories and how they might themselves be re-integrated as part of a new historical record. This is where *Retrovisions* does a good job in showing the reader how history may be revisited and reinterpreted in popular culture and how that in turn connects with what is going on in society that requires us to look back on history more carefully.

Scriptwriting for the Screen

By Charlie Moritz
London: Routledge, 2001. ISBN 0-415-22912-X. viii + 174 pp. £8.99 (pbk), £40.00 (hbk)
A Poetics for Screenwriters By Lance Lee

A Poetics for Screenwriters

Lance Lee

Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001. ISBN 0-292-74719-5. x + 145 pp. £11.50 (pbk), £25.79 (hbk)

A review by Cynthia Baron, Bowling Green State University, USA

While there may be a finite number of stories, the supply of publications on writing for film and television seems almost infinite. Selecting useful resources from the array of books, magazines, and websites that promise to help writers develop their storytelling skills, expand their creativity, and improve their chances in the marketplace presents a challenge to scriptwriters that is perhaps no less daunting than the obstacles their fictional characters face. (For a quick look at what is available, visit the website maintained by Writers Write or page through the appendices in *Screenplay: Writing the Picture*.) With guides on writing for film and television so numerous, how can interested readers best select their sources?

Many people choose to read scores of books and interviews, sometimes developing their own reference libraries of well-established texts by writers such as William Froug (*Zen and the Art of Screenwriting*), Linda Seger (*Making a Good Script Great*), William Goldman (*Adventures in the Screen Trade*), and Christopher Vogler (*The Writer's Journey*). Others depend, at least at first, on books used in classes that have been designed to meet various objectives. Courses that give students a screenwriting-focused introduction to film history might use books such as Linda Cowgill's *Secrets of Screenplay Structure* or Inga Karetnikova's *How Scripts Are Made*. Semester long courses for a wide range of students might use comprehensive texts such as Paul Lucey's *Story Sense* or Russin and Down's *Screenplay: Writing the Picture*. Advanced writers might read books such as Andrew Horton's *Writing the Character-Centered Screenplay* or Ron Suppa's *The Business of Screenwriting*. Aspiring writers in time-intensive workshops and summer courses might read Denny Martin Flinn's *How Not to Write a Screenplay* or Cooper and Dancyer's *Writing the Short Film*.

Where do *Scriptwriting for the Screen* by Charlie Moritz and *A Poetics for Screenwriters* by Lance Lee fit in the constellation of texts on writing for film and television? I believe that Moritz's work would be useful for formal courses or informal writing groups that bring

together aspiring or experienced scriptwriters. By comparison, Lee's book seems best suited to independent study by a rather limited set of readers, namely, aspiring writers who draw their inspiration from authors such as Robert Bly (*Iron John: A Book about Men*) or Sam Keen (*Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man*) or who see a text such as Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* as the primary model for storytelling.

While Moritz presents his work as a "graduated, practical guide for beginners" (vii), the inventive exercises in *Scriptwriting for the Screen* give it the potential for revitalizing the work of even experienced scriptwriters. Moritz's book also brings a new perspective to discussions about scriptwriting. Drawing on the work of theatre practitioners like Augusto Boal and Keith Johnstone, Moritz shows how "writing drama is no more nor less than an introjected version of acting" (71). By comparison, Lee's book breaks no new ground by linking its discussion to Aristotle's *Poetics*. Ben Brady and Lance Lee's *Understructure of Writing for Film and Television* published in 1988 had considered screenwriting within the tradition of dramatic literature. Moreover, Aristotle's *Poetics* forms the basis of most screenwriting workshops; John Truby's long-standing story structure workshops are a case in point.

While UT Press may have envisioned Lee's *Poetics* as an advanced guide for people who have read Brady and Lee's 1988 text, Lee's book fails to offer new insights into developing creativity or writing skills. It begins from the suspect premise that the key to unlocking writers' imaginations lies in understanding the mythic elements of Hollywood blockbusters. Moreover, he insists that writers create work outside and beyond the conventions of standard Hollywood fare, yet he establishes *Star Wars* as the ideal of contemporary dramatic writing (84). Lee's account of dramatic history is marked by generalizations, contradictions, and inaccuracies. He locates Kurosawa's films within the tradition of Greek tragedy rather than Noh drama. Telling readers that current Hollywood screenwriting derives from nineteenth-century naturalism, Lee blithely fails to mention boulevard theatre as an antecedent, and he conflates romanticism's demand for pictorial realism with naturalism's interest in characters defined by social circumstance.

Lee's focus on primordial structures preempts any real discussion of writing for a visual medium. That choice makes Lee's book very different from Moritz's *Scriptwriting for the Screen*. For example, Moritz devotes an entire chapter to "visualising the action," and in his chapter on dialogue, Moritz provides simple but convincing examples of how stilted dialogue results from failing to "keep seeing your drama as you write it" (88). Lee's failure to address visual storytelling, along with his incoherent position on Hollywood blockbusters and his distorted vision of dramatic history make Lee's Poetics a book that aspiring screenwriters should avoid.

Not everyone would agree with my assessment. *The American Center for Artists*, an electronic magazine that features articles on writers, painters, sculptors, and musicians, carries a detailed review of Lee's book (www.americanartists.org). Reviewer Lia Hotchkiss finds that Lee speaks to artists as an artist because he proposes, for example, that a character who has captured a screenwriter's attention "gives a face to some conflict or drive that a screenwriter distances himself from by putting it into a screenplay" (Lee 89). Lee's view that art emerges from psychic conflict is, of course, not an original idea. Notwithstanding certain film performances by some Method Actors, it also fails to be a very reliable foundation for making art. As someone who has worked in development for several years and now teaches

courses in screenwriting, I can only report that writers who use personal issues as their primary guide produce, at best, mediocre screenplays.

Moritz offers a much more secure foundation, for he shows writers how to move beyond personal psychology. Bringing a post-Method approach to acting into the purview of scriptwriting, Moritz explains that writers, who necessarily "make the ambitious choice of playing *all* the characters," must ask themselves three vital questions: what would I do or say now?; what would anyone do or say now?; what would my character do or say now? (72) Moritz encourages writers to draw on their own lived experience, but he demonstrates the value of moving beyond that experience to explore different ways to communicate with audiences and to tap into the Stanislavskian insight that dramatic art is driven by what specific characters do in given circumstances.

In contrast to the passing references Lee makes to disparate films, plays, and literary works, Moritz presents readers with examples that are carefully analyzed. For example, in his chapter on transforming "ideas into action," a short Moritz screenplay provides a concrete, accessible case study for discussing ways that writers can develop plot possibilities. In his chapter on "visualising the action," Moritz shows the value of "getting to know what every moment in your drama looks like as well as knowing what it sounds like" by taking readers step by step through scenes in *Some Mother's Son* and *My Left Foot* (47). In his chapter on dialogue, Moritz contrasts samples of poorly written dialogue with the effective rhythm of the dialogue in a scene from *Shallow Grave*. In his chapter on scenes and sequences, Moritz demonstrates the powerful effect of scriptwriting built on "the writer's ability to inhabit the emotional truth of each and every moment" of a scene with detailed studies of scenes from *Coronation Street* episodes (103). Moritz clarifies his discussion on metaphor using a short screenplay and excerpts from *American Beauty* and *The Fisher King*. In his chapter on subtext, Moritz uses scenes in *The English Patient* to show how "submerging real meaning beneath apparent meaning" generates audience interest and helps to create scores of "potential complications and tensions between characters" (143). To illustrate what he means by "putting it all together," Moritz takes excerpts from the BBC miniseries *Our Friends in the North* as the case study material because, Moritz explains, it represents a well-funded project that did not sidestep political issues, a story that "grew out of a writer's personal background, experience, and vision," and a television drama "written and crafted to the highest standards" (155).

Distinctions between Moritz and Lee's books are apparent in the tone that marks even their first few pages. In his Introduction, Lee addresses readers using the voice of the great dramatist, the teacher who will reveal the primordial elements he has discovered. He promises that his *Poetics* will give readers "a concise summary of all essential aspects of the screenwriter's art and its place in society, the psyche, and the history of drama" (ix). Explaining that his *Poetics* offers "an overview of the essential elements that both a beginner and a professional should find useful," Lee states, without qualification, that "'o'nly Aristotle's *Poetics*, written 2,400 years ago and focused on Greek tragedy, offers such an overview of the dramatic art" (ix).

By comparison, Moritz begins by asking readers to think of *Scriptwriting for the Screen* as a "trusty companion on 'a' journey" that can be "tremendous fun and also hugely fulfilling" (viii). In the opening chapter, he explains that his book is designed to simplify the scriptwriting process, making it easier to "really notice what it is we are attempting to do" (1). Later in his chapter on transforming "ideas into action," Moritz humorously soft-pedals the

point that writers must attend to dramatic structure. He writes, "'a's someone who was a relatively late convert to the idea of detailed planning -- choosing instead to believe that writing was such a magical process that detailed planning was a gross, mechanical interference -- I have to say I am now a staunch advocate" (32). Throughout the book, he maintains a relaxed tone that encourages writers to trust their imaginations to find story material and to develop their scripts beyond initial drafts.

Moritz exemplifies ways that writers can benefit from working with "like-minded enthusiasts" (viii). Rather than presenting his book as the only necessary guide, Moritz pauses at various points to direct readers to selections by other screenwriting experts. He also serves as a model for writers who want to make a living writing for the screen. Rather than arguing for a rigid divide between writing for film and writing for television, Moritz "offers readers some strategies towards dramatising for the screen, applying them right across the board" (vii). One imagines that writers could come away from *Scriptwriting for the Screen* with useful working methods and informed career strategies precisely because Moritz does not just describe but actually dramatizes the value of collaboration and expertise in various forms of scriptwriting.

A Skin For Dancing In: Possession, Witchcraft and Voodoo in Film

By Tanya Krzywinska
Trowbridge: Flick Books, 2001. ISBN 1-86236-009-X. 7 black and white stills, x + 214 pp.
£14.95 (pbk)

A review by Brigid Cherry, St Mary's College, University of Surrey, UK

In her preface to *A Skin For Dancing In*, Tanya Krzywinska asks what are "the discursive and psychic investments at work in cinematic representations of the irrational and the supernatural" (ix). Her book thus examines the narrative alignments at work in films which take the occult -- namely, the possession, witchcraft and voodoo films of the book's subtitle -- as their theme. Adopting Kenneth Anger's observation that cinema itself is an extension of magical thinking, Krzywinska's thesis thus transcends genre boundaries. She asks why magic and demonology are such attractive subjects for filmmakers and ponders the question of whether occult cinema is an expression of the cultural need for expression of the sacred. The result is a critical analysis of occult themed cinema taking in a wide range of different film types, styles, budgets and origins from classic British horror (*The Wicker Man* and *The Devil Rides Out*) to science fiction (*Strange Days* and *Demon Seed*), children's fairy tales (*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*) to post-modern surrealist cinema (*Lost Highway*), Arthurian myth (*Excalibur*) to Hollywood romantic comedy (*Bell Book and Candle*). Examples of films are taken from the entire span of cinema history (from the silent Swedish film *Häxan* to the very recent Hollywood offering *Practical Magic*), and from mainstream cinema (*The Exorcist*) to blaxploitation (*Scream, Blacula, Scream*). Nor does Krzywinska restrict herself only to the cinema; she looks too to television in an examination of the mini-series *Merlin* and episodes of *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. The book is thus ambitious in scope and while this makes for occasional disharmonious conjunctions of films and some strained parallels at times, overall the strength of the material is in its range and depth of analysis.

The book is in five sections examining the possession of nuns, male oedipal relations, paganism, aspects of femininity in witchcraft films and voodoo, each section examining a particular theme in which Krzywinska provides close readings of a selection of films reflecting on that theme. In this respect, each chapter is self-contained and can stand pretty much on its own. Indeed most subsections can be taken independently if the reader has a particular interest in a single film.

The first section, then, considers the rise and development of religious possession in films such as *Häxan*, *Black Narcissus* and Ken Russell's *The Devils* in the context of medievalism and Christian mythologies of demonic possession. In a cultural context, Krzywinska uses the historical background to explore the reasons why such a sub-genre as the possessed nun film should be a peculiarly European phenomenon. Section two turns from female possession to male and examines the relationship between possession and demonology, re-examining Freudian theories of the Oedipal relation in films such as *The Exorcist*, *Lost Highway* and

Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me. For her analysis of witch cults and sacrifice in section three, Krzywinska turns rather more originally to the writings of Aleister Crowley and J. G. Frazer and considers films like *The Wicker Man* and *The Devil Rides Out* in the light of the Victorian rise of interest in pagan and occult material which led to the formation of The Golden Dawn and other magical societies. In section four, Krzywinska returns to theories of gender in her examination of witchcraft films such as *Bell Book and Candle* and *The Craft* as well as depictions of witchcraft in narratives ranging from *Excalibur* to *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* and *Valerie and Her Week of Wonders*. Consideration of gender is also given in the final section on voodoo and both these sections analyse the films from a feminist perspective. The aforementioned final section on voodoo cinema also considers the genre from the perspective of the Gothic theory of the sublime in order to consider representations of otherness, particularly in the area of race and colonialist imagery.

Thus, there is a whole range of theoretical approaches at work in this text and Krzywinska draws them together in an attempt to explain why the occult is -- and has always been -- such a strong draw for filmmakers (and not always those working in obviously occult genres). This eclectic approach to theoretical analysis is refreshing if a little disparate, and even contradictory, at times. This is not so much a flaw as an opportunity to raise questions which Krzywinska does not have the scope or opportunity to answer here. What, for example, is at stake -- outside of the cultural issues -- for the multiple and fragmented audience in these films (while Krzywinska considers this question in relation to many of the films she analyses it deserves a more considered approach elsewhere)? More importantly, the book also raises questions about the very nature of genre theory and genre studies. *A Skin For Dancing In* is not a study of generic conventions, rather it is the exploration of a narrative theme that transcends cinematic genres. Krzywinska draws parallels amongst a heterogeneous set of films and despite the fact that the book still tends towards disunity overall, the often apt drawing together of common threads within chapters and the never less than interesting links to theoretical, cultural and historical contexts make this an often illuminating account from a quasi-genre perspective. This is not just a text for those readers with an interest in horror, the Gothic and fantasy cinema. It is a lucid account of occult themes in the cinema as a whole and thus of interest to film scholars from a broad range of backgrounds. Furthermore, it provides close analyses of many esoteric and rarely considered films. *A Skin For Dancing In* is a meaningful contribution to the study of the sacred and the fantastic in cinema.

Spectacular Narratives: Hollywood in the Age of the Blockbuster

A review by Marlon Kuzmick, Cornell University, USA

To many critics, the major Hollywood "blockbusters" of the 1990s seemed to signal the arrival of something radically new -- perhaps a trajectory that would lead to the return of the pre-narrative "cinema of attractions", perhaps the arrival of a post-narrative cinema of spectacle. Geoff King's new book, *Spectacular Narratives*, directs some legitimate questions at this critical stance, arguing (as the title of the book might imply) for the continued relevance of narrative, and suggesting that the interesting question for what we might call "blockbuster studies" is the relationship between spectacle and narrative rather than any supposed ascendancy of the former at the expense of the latter.

King sees the "reasons for the hasty dismissal of the importance of narrative in contemporary Hollywood" (3) as a function of early theorists' overstatement of narrative's dominance in classical Hollywood cinema. Clearly spectacle and narrative can *both* be found in classical Hollywood cinema, and the relationship between the two reveals the fact that spectacle is only meaningful, affecting, and (most importantly for Hollywood) *marketable* if it is framed by narrative. This approach to the spectacle-narrative opposition allows King to explain, for instance, why it is that *Saving Private Ryan*'s two spectacular battle sequences feel so different: the first, relatively unframed by narrative, seeming really quite revolutionary, and the second, framed by typical Spielbergian melodrama, seeming rather conventional and banal.

Crucially, for King, the archetypal narrative that frames the modern blockbuster is not merely one narrative among others. It is none other than the "frontier myth", a primal fantasy that many would argue to be the foundation of American culture (if you want to market your movie to the greatest number of people, its thematic content must be of the lowest common denominator). King deftly demonstrates that the narrative structures of recent blockbusters such as *Twister*, *Independence Day*, *Titanic* and *Jurassic Park* are determined by the opposition between a "frontier zone" -- be it a tornado, a war with aliens, or an island of dinosaurs -- and technological modernity. These films satisfy the spectator by offering imaginary (i.e. ideological) resolutions to these conflicts in the form of heroic characters that successfully straddle the line between the unknowable, often savage other and civilisation. Furthermore, King argues that when the spectacles offered by the blockbuster intrude into the spectator's quotidian experience, this rupture is structurally homologous to the extreme phenomena presented in the film's diegetic world: the viewer is granted "a vicarious equivalent of the frontier experience celebrated thematically at the level of narrative" (5). Thus, those who proclaim the supreme ascendancy of spectacle miss not only the fact that

narrative must frame spectacle, but the fact that spectacle itself often supports or mirrors narrative structure.

King's attention to the myth of the frontier is so all-pervasive in *Spectacular Narratives*, that one wonders why it doesn't merit recognition in the title or subtitle. In fact, it seems at times as though the book is the result of two rather separate projects. To be sure, these two projects dovetail perfectly in a number of chapters, particularly in those chapters that limit themselves to discussing the "event" pictures of the nineties (*Twister*, *Jurassic Park*, etc.). But in those chapters that stray into discussions of earlier blockbusters, King's two major arguments coexist rather uneasily, and this tension threatens to undermine the force of what is supposed to be the book's main thesis. *Star Wars*, for instance, clearly works well in any discussion of displaced frontier narratives -- and King's comments on "space fictions" are indeed illuminating -- but does there exist a critic who would seriously dispute the centrality of *narrative* to the *Star Wars* trilogy?

Spectacular Narratives is not the only work to suffer from what is a rather cruel paradox: often, the more proof one offers for a particular thesis, the less profound that thesis seems. The more detailed King's readings of blockbuster narratives, the more we take the importance of narrative for granted. As King himself points out, the centrality of narrative in Hollywood film, and of the frontier-narrative in particular, may seem "'merely' obvious" (12). In order to counter the ostensibly obvious nature of his argument, King is often compelled to overstate his opponents' claims (ironic, considering the fact that he himself accuses them of overstatement). He quotes Scott Bukatman, for instance, as suggesting that the modern blockbuster, or "theme park movie", has become "a set of over designed, hermetically sealed, totalizing environments masquerading as movies" (180). For King, this "sweeping claim" is "purely hyperbolic", but, to be fair, rather less hyperbolic is Bukatman's further claim that films have become "less narrative than they used to be and more spectacular" (180). Indeed, arguing against this level headed point rather than Bukatman's earlier rhetorical flourish would push King into the equally untenable position that there is nothing new under the sun, that the contemporary "theme park" blockbuster is not a new development at all -- and while *Spectacular Narratives* would seem to be founded on the presupposition that the contemporary blockbuster is a discrete and at least somewhat novel genre, at times King comes perilously close to implying the contrary.

Finally, it must be noted that readers familiar with film theory will no doubt be surprised to find that Laura Mulvey's name never comes up in King's discussion of spectacle and narrative. While he mentions a few writers who have themselves expanded on Mulvey's examinations of gender and spectacle, King refrains from offering us an explicit encounter with this highly influential branch of spectacle theory. This may well be because the connection between woman, to-be-looked-at-ness, and spectacle in Mulvey's theory seems (at first glance anyway) not to fit the hyper-masculine action-spectacles that interest King, but it would have been interesting to see an attempt either to employ Mulvey in the process of thinking the blockbuster, or to employ the blockbuster's spectacles in the process of re-examining, and, perhaps, critiquing Mulvey's theory.

Technology and the Logic of American Racism: A Cultural History of the Body as Evidence

By Sarah E. Chinn
New York and London: Continuum, 2000. ISBN 0-8264-4750-3. xvii + 225 pp. £14.99 (pbk), £45.00 (hbk)

A review by Richard H. King, University of Nottingham, UK

It is easy to think of race as a construct or a biological fact and of racism as an ideology and/or as the product of irrational emotions or of rational self-interest. But Sarah Chinn's new book reminds us that both race and racism are found/invented through instruments, tools, and practices that emerge historically and change over time. Though she doesn't develop it quite so explicitly, *Technology and the Logic of American Racism* suggests that the dominant signifier of race in America has unfolded historically from an emphasis upon skin color up to the end of slavery to a new focus upon "blood" until roughly 1945 and then to a concern with genetics, specifically DNA. Each new way of signifying difference seems to have undermined the previous one.

Similarly, though less systematically, the techniques/technologies associated with defining race and its role in identifying individual and group difference have ranged from phrenology and craniometry to palmistry and fingerprinting, from IQ tests to blood transfusion technology and DNA testing. Some of these techniques have proven bogus and the province of charlatans, while others remain perfectly respectable techniques. Though she does not explicitly address the following issue, in most cases technology as such has been neutral as to the uses and abuses of race but the dominant ethos since the Civil War at least has meant that it has been used to identify and confirm racist theories and practices more than it has been used to undermine them, at least until the last half century or so.

Chinn's book begins with a general introductory chapter "Theorizing the body as evidence" and then moves to four cases studies involving the representations of race and the techniques mentioned in the previous paragraphs. If anything links all these chapters, it is that the effort to discover a causal link between physical traits or characteristics and moral or intellectual capabilities has been a constant modern pre-occupation at a popular as well as a scientific level. There is a chapter on Mark Twain's *The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson* which focuses on the use of palmistry and fingerprinting, among other techniques, to establish racial identity, followed by a chapter that deals with Nella Larsen's *Passing* and a *cause celebre* of the 1920s, the Rhinelander Case in which husband, "Kip" Rhinelander, sued his wife for annulment of their marriage on the grounds that she had defrauded him into making him think she was "white." Though the lesson is an old one -- race is a social construct and by no means coincides with color differences -- Chinn's joining of the Larsen novel with the "real world" legal case together makes for an intellectually exciting chapter, perhaps her best. The

chapter on the rise of blood donorship as a marker of patriotism, even citizenship, in World War II brings the issues of race and citizenship into close proximity. The classification of blood by types succeeded in undermining racial typologies, since blood types didn't /don't map onto racial types in any convincing way. Yet, at the same time, the Red Cross marked the blood of black donors secretly, so that no whites would receive black blood. But a certain progress was made, since in principle "citizenship" as a voluntary act of participation seemed to trump "nationality" based on a quasi-family or geographical model of political belonging. The final case study focuses on the on-going search, as in the Human Genome Project, to link genes with physical traits or symptoms of disorder and disease. But Chinn concludes with guarded optimism that DNA testing may serve more to show how we are all "related," as in the Sally Hemmings-Thomas Jefferson case, than to further the racist project of drawing ineradicable differences among us.

Overall, *Technology and the Logic of American Racism* is a smart and often fascinating study, despite Chinn's proclivity at times to throw undigested scientific jargon at the reader. But there is a problem about what the individual chapters amount to when taken as a whole. For, structuring the book around case histories means that an overarching historical framework is missing and that in turn means that Chinn's choice of cases can seem arbitrary; indeed, I found the last chapter on DNA less convincingly "about" race than the other chapters. Chinn might argue that this shows a certain advance away from racial determinism over the course of the 20th century. But, then, Chinn's approach still begs the question of what caused or contributed to the decline of the intellectual, moral and political importance of race in American life. Why and how have technologies at one time been pressed into the service of 'racial science," while later serving, if anything, to undermine racist assumptions about biological differences? It is hard to find an answer in Chinn's text.

A final irony: Chinn's study is part of a series of works all based on the assumption, as series editor Sally R. Munt states, of the "realness of matter, of the substance of culture…"(vii), this being one of the foundational assumptions of Critical Research in Material Culture (viii). Yet this was just the metaphysical assumption that undergirded modern racial science/ technology and gave them the appearance of being "progressive" developments away from outmoded religious assumptions about the soul. My point here is not that philosophical materialism is right or wrong -- the issue no longer seems to me an important one -- but that ideologically programmatic materialism, even when pressed into the service of a critique of racism, may perpetuate a world-view in which one continues to discover mental and spiritual capabilities, or glean moral lessons, from bodily structures and functions. And that is what landed us in the race and racism dead-end in the first place. Next to that, an acceptance of the mind-body split looks positively benign.

Television: An International History

By Anthony Smith (ed.) and Richard Paterson (ass. ed)
Oxford: Oxford University Press, Second Edition, 2000. ISBN 0-1981-5928-5. 294 pp.
£17.99 (pbk)

A review by Michael Curtin, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

Although the Internet receives much more attention in the West, the spread of television over the past two decades has, in many respects, fostered a more pervasive media revolution worldwide. Indeed, since the late 1980s, India, China, and much of Southeast Asia experienced a staggering growth in TV audiences, adding close to two billion new viewers. As the medium adds new viewers, it also incorporates new producers and it cultivates new centers of program production. Bombay, Hong Kong, and Singapore exert powerful regional influences, but this is furthermore complemented by more localized circuits based in cities such as Hyderabad, Kuala Lumpur, and Taipei. Once a medium thoroughly dominated by Hollywood, television today features complex webs of cultural interaction. Though Western conglomerates continue to generate the biggest profits and control many of the most important patents and copyrights, television is paradoxically both global in reach *and* increasingly local in many of its most popular forms of programming. In terms of revenues and resources, Western conglomerates certainly exert a formidable transnational force, but in terms of audience attention -- the salient commodity of the medium -- local and regional television services have risen to unparalleled levels of popularity and influence. It is for this very reason that an international history of television is perhaps more necessary now than ever before. With that in mind, Anthony Smith and associate editor Richard Paterson have assembled an impressive collection of twenty-one essays in the second edition of *Television: An International History*.

Given the trajectory of the medium's development, the volume begins with its focus fixed squarely on the industrialized nations of the West where television's technological and institutional forms first evolved. Albert Abrahamson does an admirable job providing a transnational account of early experimentation with TV, even though North Atlantic nations almost exclusively dominate this narrative. Two subsequent chapters relating the early institutional development of the medium display a similar orientation with William Boddy describing the US commercial system and Anthony Smith tracing the roots of the European public service tradition. Although the scope of these three chapters are much more expansive (and therefore more complicated) than most nationally-based histories of television, the historical terrain is nevertheless circumscribed and therefore relatively manageable.

Problems emerge, however, in the second section of the book, which is devoted to the history of television's forms and genres. Here the writers face the daunting challenge of making sense of the cumulative output of the medium in its international variations. Pity poor Richard Paterson, for example, who must deal with the history of drama and entertainment programming within the scope of roughly 5000 words! Nimbly hopskotching around the globe, he observes, for example, that:

The serial form 'of television drama' has undergone different mutations in different territories: in the UK *Coronation Street* or *EastEnders* are prime-time soaps, now imitated across Europe with programmes like *Lindenstrasse* in Germany. The top-rated fiction in Japan in the early 1990s has been *Kimino Nawa*, a fifteen-minute narrative based on a popular radio series which started in the 1950s. It is broadcast each morning at 8.15 by NHK. For many years another serial, *Oshin*, was a morning event in Japan... In India, the initial attempt to use the drama serial as a vehicle for a pro-social message with *Hum Log* in 1985 was based on earlier Mexican success with this use of popular drama. *Hum Log* became popular only when these elements were dropped and the more usual domestic drama dominated. After this success other serials were produced and the serialization of the religious epic, *Mahabarat*, became something of a national event in securing huge audiences (61).

The texture of this passage aptly conveys the conflicted authorial mission of this volume. Paterson frames his essay with broad generalizations about the various formats and genres of entertainment television, but then he seems to feel obliged to provide examples that equitably represent the contributions of producers from around the world. This engenders a persistent balancing act between a broad analysis of generic trends and a breathless cataloguing of variations across time and space. Consequently, we actually learn little about the programs themselves or the specific historical contexts from which they emerged. Why, for example, did *Mahabarat* become the site of nationalist fervor and religious tension during the early 1990s, at a time when many Indians were embracing the secular politics of the right-wing BJP? Likewise, what values did the character Oshin represent to loyal viewers who reflected upon her rise from modest rural circumstances in pre-war Japan to the leadership of one of the country's most powerful supermarket chains during the exuberant boom economy of the 1980s? Such details would deepen the analysis and enliven the narrative but they might wreak havoc with the volume's ambition to provide a sweeping historical account that touches base in all corners of the globe. In the following chapter, when Michael Tracey examines non-fiction television he faces a similar challenge and at one point packs three sentences with such disparate references that one strains to discern the links between television coverage of the Ethiopian Famine and the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana. As such examples indicate balance and comprehensiveness can sometimes lead to the kind of shallowness of which television is often accused. The third section of the book faces similar challenges as it attempts to account for the relationship between television and society. Only in this case, the authors keep circling back to examples from the West -- where the relationship between television and society has been more extensively researched and debated -- rather than serving up cursory examples from around the globe. In section two the international references are relatively shallow, while in section three they continue to skew towards Western societies.

The final section of the book no doubt attempts to redress some of these problems by offering a collection of eleven essays that focus on particular geographical regions. Yet the editors once again confront analytical problems such as: How does one carve up the world? Which regions can be discussed in a coherent manner? And where does one locate authors who feel up to the challenge? Chapters on Canada, Australia, and Japan prove far more manageable than the chapters on Africa, Latin American, or Greater China. This is not to say that national histories of television are more desirable. Indeed, Smith and Paterson's volume is to be admired primarily because it struggles against the persistent tendency to tell the story of television in convenient national containers despite the fact that the medium today is

incessantly transgressing geopolitical boundaries. One problem that television historians therefore confront is that the more global the medium becomes, the more difficult it is to consider television as a coherent or unified cultural phenomenon in any but the most superficial sense. One could continue to produce manageable national histories of television, but this volume more ambitiously seeks to write an international account of the medium's development. The rationale for such a shift in the historiography of television is suggested in the introduction where Smith writes, "The new myth-making 'and television programming' of the mid-twenty-first century is as likely to emanate from Russia, from Japan, China, or South America as from the United States. There are industrial and investment issues to be resolved but as the medium becomes universal and abundant, other more historically rooted factors will come to influence the flows of the market-place of television material" (4). This media revolution is already beginning to take shape. The challenge then for historians is to develop new frameworks for analyzing growth of television as an international phenomenon.

Understanding Disney

By Janet Wasko
Cambridge: Polity Press. ISBN 0-7456-1484-1. ix + 261 pp. £14.99 (pbk)

A review by Paul Grainge, University of Nottingham, UK

Janet Wasko is clearly conscious of the proliferation of academic titles that dissect and deconstruct the Disney Universe. Accordingly, her own contribution to the field, *Understanding Disney*, is quick to state (and continually re-state) its critical purpose. *Understanding Disney* is not a book, Wasko is keen to stress, that examines Disney with the depth of analysis that some scholars have provided in their specific rhetorical/feminist/psychoanalytic/literary critiques. Instead, Wasko puts stock in the breadth of her analysis; she argues for the need to conceive and examine Disney in its totality. In this view, feminist readings of *The Little Mermaid* or racial interpretations of *Pocahontas* are certainly valuable but not without a broad picture of Disney's audiences, corporate history, business operations, and more general patterning of social meaning and value. While much Disney scholarship has come in the form of textual analysis, Wasko is keen to instil and complement this mode of analysis with economic and consumption-based perspectives. She writes: "more work is needed linking textual interpretations to corporate imperatives, as well as assessing how Classic Disney themes are received, accepted, and/or reworked by consumers and audiences" (225). In remodeling Disney critique, incorporating the crucial frameworks of political economy and cultural studies, *Understanding Disney* is an undoubted success.

Borne out of a module on Disney that Wasko teaches at the University of Oregon, the tone and organization of *Understanding Disney* is very much that of a course textbook. This is not a criticism, and neither should it be seen to limit the book's use and significance for scholars of Disney and global media more generally. With the profusion of Disney criticism in recent years, Wasko has done a valuable service synthesising the critical tendencies and conclusions of this growing corpus of work. Large sections of the book assimilate current scholarship into clear and digestible units. Wasko is a master of headings and numbered sub-headings and this methodical style is used throughout the book to organize theories on classic Disney themes (magic, fantasy, innocence, good and evil), Disney consumers (fanatic, fan, consumer, cynic, resister, uninterested, antagonist), and modes of discourse analysis (feminist, psychoanalytic, Marxian). Considering the historical and contemporary status of Disney, and with separate chapters considering issues of economic production, discursive mediation and cultural consumption, *Understanding Disney* is a comprehensive analysis of one of the entertainment industry's quintessential brands. As such, the book should find a life beyond its obvious and welcome use as a teaching text.

Unsurprising for a book written by a political economist of communication, the strongest chapters of *Understanding Disney* are those which address "the Disney Empire" and "Corporate Disney in Action." Both contain a wealth of information about holdings, investments and markets that are linked conceptually to theories (corporate and academic) such as "synergy" and "globalization." Wasko is an important and persuasive critic not

because of the necessary complexity or sophistication of her writing. Rather, it is in the skill she demonstrates in finding, marshalling and interpreting evidentiary materials. She expertly culls corporate reports, industry factbooks and shareholder statistics to build an economic platform from which to frame and relate her textual and cultural analysis. Wasko is perhaps not quite as comfortable on textual grounds, assimilating arguments rather than providing her own, but the sheer lack of research on Disney's audience has prompted Wasko and colleagues to undertake new (questionnaire-based) investigations into the reception of Disney products. This research leads not only to conclusions about the relative stability of Disney values across cultures (family, magic, fun, innocence), but to the kinds of Disney consumer who respond to those values. If anyone could possibly be in doubt about the cultural power of Disney, the picture of George Reiger -- a man with over 1000 Disney tattoos in places that you may not wish to probe -- will be an alarm call. Interestingly, Disney has enforced copyright protection against certain cases of Disney tattooing, demonstrating, not least, Wasko's eye for a revealing corporate news feature. As a broad summation of current scholarship, and a persuasive model of integrative critique, *Understanding Disney* will be of significant value to students and critics alike.

Writing for Radio

By Vincent McInerney
Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2001. ISBN 0-7190-5843-0. xii + 276pp. £14.99 (pbk), £40.00 (hbk)

A review by Martin Shingler, Staffordshire University, UK

In later life, many people get the urge to write for radio, turning their ideas and experiences into drama, documentaries, short stories and poems. For these people Vincent McInerney's *Writing for Radio* may prove invaluable or at least well worth £14.99. Intelligently written and clearly structured, it provides insightful observations, examples and exercises, along with practical techniques for developing ideas into scripts. Working independently, readers of this book can use it as a comprehensive crash course in radio writing. Meanwhile, those taking evening-classes in creative writing can use it as an accompanying textbook should they wish to adapt their work to radio. It offers both the independent and the evening-class reader inspiration, encouragement and practical advice. It includes extracts from classic literature and classic radio programmes as well as suggested scenarios that readers can develop into scripts of their own. Examples of script lay-out and presentation are provided for readers, enabling professional-looking scripts to be produced that can be submitted to the BBC. Tutors who run evening-classes on creative writing will find this useful to recommend to their students. They can also use it as a template for their own sessions on radio-writing and adopt some of the exercises for their classes.

On the final page of his book, Vincent McInerney states that older people make better writers than young people: a comforting thought for those coming to radio-writing late in life. Not so comforting, of course, for younger college and university students, who are more likely to find this disheartening. They may also find his references to classic rather than contemporary popular literature off-putting. Consequently, tutors of radio writing courses with predominantly 17-22 year old students may be less enthusiastic about recommending this book than tutors with more mature students.

One of the biggest problems facing the tutor of a college or university radio course is that young students will all too readily assume that radio is an old-fashioned medium, irrelevant and unexciting compared to television or cinema. Moreover, only a minority of young students listen regularly to the programme forms discussed in this book: radio dramas, documentaries, short stories, comedy and poetry. In the UK, BBC Radio 4 has long provided the main outlet for these and the audience of this station hardly needs converting to the joys of literary radio. Fans of Radio 4 are rarely under thirty years of age, which means that twenty-somethings eager to write for the mass media need substantial encouragement to write for radio. Comedy, particularly *On the Town with the League of Gentlemen* and Chris Morris's *Blue Jam* tend to fire their imagination and inspire them. Of the 'classics' only *The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* remains inspirational for young listeners. It's not just comedy that has the power to do this though. Lee Hall's *Spoonface Steinberg* ordinarily engages student interest in the dramatic potential of radio. It is certainly more likely to

achieve this than Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* or Ewan McColl and Charles Parker's *Radio Ballads*. Unfortunately new and young radio writing talent is not strongly represented in McInerney's book. Moreover, his examples of 'mindvisible' (i.e. graphic and imaginative) writing, namely Dickens' *David Copperfield* and Tolstoy's *War and Peace* would need to be replaced by something along the lines of *Bridget Jones' Diary* or JK Rowling's *Harry Potter* books to inspire younger writers.

Vincent McInerney's *Writing for Radio* will be most appreciated by an older readership that has long since discovered the joys of BBC Radio 4. A younger generation of college and university students will no doubt find this less than inspirational and be better served by a book of the same title by Shaun MacLoughlin and republished by How To Books in 2001. At half the length (147 pages) and almost half the price (£8.99), this *Writing for Radio* book may appeal more to younger students. It may still lack references to Bridget Jones, Harry Potter and Spoonface Steinberg but it does have a chapter on writing comedy and its small comic drawings give it the impression of being a more student-friendly read.