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### ALEXIA SWANSON

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*Art and Artifice in Contemporary American Film* Psychology Press

What do contemporary American movies and directors have to say about the relationship between nature and art? How do science fiction films like Steven Spielberg's A.I. and Darren Aronofsky's  $\pi$  represent the apparent oppositions between nature and culture, wild and tame? Steven Dillon's intriguing new volume surveys American cinema from 1990 to 2002 with substantial descriptions of sixty films, emphasizing small-budget independent American film. Directors studied include Steven Soderbergh, Darren Aronofsky, Todd Haynes, Harmony Korine, and Gus Van Sant, as well as more canonical figures like Martin Scorsese, Robert Altman, David Lynch, and Steven Spielberg. The book takes its title and inspiration from Andrei Tarkovsky's 1972 film *Solaris*, a science fiction ghost story that relentlessly explores the relationship between the powers of nature and art. The author argues that American film has the best chance of aesthetic success when it acknowledges that a film is actually a film. The best American movies tell an endless ghost story, as they perform

the agonizing nearness and distance of the cinematic image. This groundbreaking commentary examines the rarely seen bridge between select American film directors and their typically more adventurous European counterparts. Filmmakers such as Lynch and Soderbergh are cross-cut together with Tarkovsky and the great French director, Jean-Luc Godard, in order to test the limits and possibilities of American film. Both enthusiastically cinephilic and fiercely critical, this book puts a decade of U.S. film in its global place, as part of an ongoing conversation on nature and art. *From the Margins to the Mainstream* Springer  
 Contemporary Latin American Cinema investigates the ways in which neoliberal measures of privatization, de-regularization and austerity introduced in Latin America during the 1990s have impacted film production and film narratives. The collection examines the relationship between economic policies and the films that depict recent transformations in many Latin American countries, demonstrating how contemporary Latin American film has not only criticized and resisted, but also benefitted from neoliberal advancements. Based on films produced in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru since 2010, the fourteen case studies

illustrate neoliberalism's effects, from big industries to small national cinemas. It also shows the new types of producers that have emerged, and the novel patterns of distribution, exhibition and consumption that shape and influence the Latin American filmscape. Through industry studies, reception analyses and close readings, this book establishes an informative and accessible text for scholars and students alike.

[The Erotic Thriller in Contemporary Cinema](#) Routledge

This book focuses on a selection of internationally known Latin American films. The chapters are organized around national categories, grounding the readings not only in the context of social and political conditions, but also in those of each national film industry. It is a very useful text for students of the region's cultural output, as well as for students of film studies who wish to learn more about the innovative and often controversial films discussed.

**Studying Contemporary American Film** Routledge

What is the child for Latin American cinema? This book aims to answer that question, tracing the common tendencies of the representation of the child in the cinema of Latin American countries,

and demonstrating the place of the child in the movements, genres and styles that have defined that cinema. Deborah Martin combines theoretical readings of the child in cinema and culture, with discussions of the place of the child in specific national, regional and political contexts, to develop in-depth analyses and establish regional comparisons and trends. She pays particular attention to the narrative and stylistic techniques at play in the creation of the child's perspective, and to ways in which the presence of the child precipitates experiments with film aesthetics. Bringing together fresh readings of well-known films with attention to a range of little-studied works, *The Child in Contemporary Latin American Cinema* examines films from the recent and contemporary period, focussing on topics such as the death of the child in 'street child' films, the role of the child in post-dictatorship filmmaking and the use of child characters to challenge gender and sexual ideologies. The book also aims to place those analyses in a historical context, tracing links with important precursors, and paying attention to the legacy of the child's figuring in the mid-century movements of melodrama and the New Latin American Cinema.

[Indie Reframed](#) Intellect Books

*Contemporary Black American Cinema* offers a fresh collection of essays on African American film, media, and visual culture in the era of global multiculturalism. Integrating theory, history, and criticism, the contributing authors deftly connect interdisciplinary perspectives from American studies, cinema studies, cultural studies, political science, media studies, and Queer theory. This multidisciplinary methodology expands the discursive and interpretive registers of film analysis. From Paul Robeson's and Sidney Poitier's star vehicles to Lee Daniels's directorial forays, these essays address the career legacies of film stars, examine various iterations of Blaxploitation and animation, question the comedic politics of "fat suit" films, and celebrate the innovation of avant-garde and experimental cinema.

**The Legacy of Film Noir in Contemporary American Cinema** Berghahn Books

This book examines how African American directors have depicted racial issues since the mid-90s, revealing the ways in which they both consciously avoid and sometimes utilize racial stereotypes.

**The Quest for Authenticity in Contemporary American Cinema** Routledge

*American Cinema in the Shadow of 9/11* is a ground-breaking collection of essays by some of the foremost scholars writing in the field of contemporary American film. Through a dynamic critical analysis of the defining films of the turbulent post-9/11 decade, the volume explores and interrogates the impact of 9/11 and the 'War on Terror' on American cinema and culture. In a vibrant discussion of films like *American Sniper* (2014), *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012), *Spectre* (2015), *The Hateful Eight* (2015), *Lincoln* (2012), *The Mist* (2007), *Children of Men* (2006), *Edge of Tomorrow* (2014) and *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015), noted authors Geoff King, Guy Westwell, John Shelton Lawrence, Ian Scott, Andrew Schopp, James Kendrick, Sean Redmond, Steffen Hantke and many others consider the power of popular film to function as a potent cultural artefact, able to both reflect the defining fears and anxieties of the tumultuous era, but also shape them in compelling and resonant ways.

[Ecology in Contemporary American Cinema](#) Contemporary American Cinema

A comprehensive overview of the film industry in Hollywood today, *Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* brings together leading international cinema scholars to explore the technology, institutions, film makers and movies of contemporary American film making.

[Hollywood's Chosen People](#) Reaktion Books

Cinema is an affective medium. Films move us to feel wonder, joy, and love as well as fear, anger, and hatred. Today, we are living through a new age of sensibility when emotion is given priority over reason. Yet, there is a counter-cultural current in contemporary American cinema that offers a more nuanced treatment of emotion. Both aesthetically and edictically, this new cinema of affect allows viewers to make up their own minds about what they feel and think. This book focuses on key films by important auteur-directors--David Fincher, Bryan Singer, Christopher Nolan, Kathryn Bigelow, Richard Linklater, Barry Jenkins, Greta Gerwig, and Pete Docter--who are to the forefront of this new cinema. It explores how they anatomize affect and how it functions in the creation or degradation of character and society.

[Engaging Film Criticism](#) Oxford University Press

The suburban landscape is inseparable from American culture. Suburbia does not only relate to the geographical concept, but also describes a cultural space incorporating people's hopes for a safe and prosperous life. Suburbia marks a dynamic ideological space constantly influenced and

recreated by both the events of everyday life and artistic discourse. Fictional texts do not merely represent suburbia, but also have a decisive role in the shaping of suburban spaces. The widely held idealized image of suburbia evolved in the 1950s. Today, reality deviates from the concept of suburbs projected back then, due to e.g. high divorce rates and an increase of crime. Nevertheless, the nostalgic view of the suburbs as the "Promised Land" has survived. Postwar critics object to this perception, considering the suburbs rather as depressing landscapes of mass-consumption, conformity and alienation. This book exemplifies the dualistic representation of suburbs in contemporary American cinema by analyzing Pleasantville, *The Truman Show* and *American Beauty*. It examines how utopian concepts of suburbia are created culturally and psychologically in the films, and how the underlying anxieties of the suburban experience, visualized by the dystopian narratives, challenge this ideal.

[Film Firsts: The 25 Movies That Created Contemporary American Cinema](#) Springer

From *Easy Rider* to *The Blair Witch Project*, this book is a comprehensive examination of the independent film scene. Exploring the uneasy relationship between independent films and the major studios, the contributors trace the changing ideas and definitions of independent cinema, and the diversity of independent film practices. They consider the ways in which indie films are marketed and distributed, and how new technologies such as video, cable and the internet, offered new opportunities for filmmakers to produce and market independent films. Turning to the work of key auteurs such as John Sayles and Haile Gerima, contributors ask whether independent filmmakers can also be stars, and consider how indie features like *Boys Don't Cry* and *Shopping for Fangs* address issues of gender, sexuality and ethnicity normally avoided by Hollywood. For all students of film studies and American studies, this cultural journey through independent film history will be an absolute must read.

**Production Design in the Contemporary American Film** Edinburgh University Press

*Contemporary American Cinema* McGraw-Hill Education (UK)

**Contemporary American Independent Film** diplom.de

Classic film noir was Hollywood's 'dark cinema' of crime and corruption; a genre underpinned by a tone of existential cynicism which stripped bare the myth of the American Dream and offered a bleak, nightmarish vision of a fragmented society that rhymed with many of the social realities of forties and fifties America. *Mean Streets* and *Raging Bulls* explores how, since its apparent demise in the late fifties, the noir genre has been revitalized during the post-studio era. The book is divided into two sections. In the first, the evolution of film noir is contextualized in relation to both American cinema's industrial transformation and the post-Depression history of the United States. In the second, the evolution of neo-noir and its relation to classic film noir is illustrated by detailed reference to representative texts including *Chinatown* (Roman Polanski, 1974), *Night Moves* (Arthur Penn, 1975), *Taxi Driver* (Martin Scorsese, 1976), *Blood Simple* (Joel and Ethan Coen, 1984), *After Hours* (Martin Scorsese, 1985), *Sea of Love* (Harold Becker, 1989), *Reservoir Dogs* (Quentin Tarantino, 1992), and *Romeo is Bleeding* (Peter Medak, 1994).

[Breaking Into the Global Market](#) University of Texas Press

While the viewer's eyes are trained on the actors, the production design sets the mood for the film. The design also subtly comments on the action and the characters, moves the plot forward and adds to its symbolic content. The production design of 23 films of the 1980s and 1990s is analyzed here. The films are divided into five areas: realistic films set in the present day, stylized films (including horror) set in the present day, period films, period films that move through several decades, and science fiction and fantasy films. Among the movies analyzed are *The Silence of the Lambs*, *She's Gotta Have It*, *The Fisher King*, *Ragtime*, *Barton Fink*, *Goodfellas*, and *Alien*. The quality of the designs is assessed by a careful reading of the mise-en-scene. Often the designers' own words are used to describe the effects and the process involved in achieving them.

[Men in Contemporary American Cinema](#) Cambridge Scholars Publishing

This volume explores the recent 'adolescent turn' in contemporary Latin American cinema, challenging many of the underlying assumptions about the nature of youth and distinguishing adolescence as a distinct and vital area of study. Its contributors examine the narrative and political potential of teenage protagonists in a range of recent films from the region, acknowledging the distinct emotional registers that are at play throughout adolescence and releasing teenage subjectivities from restrictive critical and theoretical emphases on theories of childhood. As the first academic study to examine the figure of the adolescent in contemporary

Latin American film, *New Visions of Adolescence in Contemporary Latin American Cinema* thus presents a timely and innovative analysis of issues of sexuality and gender, political and domestic violence and social class, and will be of significant interest to students and researchers in Latin American Studies, Cultural Studies, World Cinema and Childhood Studies.

**Beyond Backlash** University of Texas Press

This text presents the most appropriate theories and methods for analyzing contemporary American cinema. Using an innovative approach to writing about individual movies, each of the main chapters examines the assumptions behind one traditional theory of film (e.g. auteurism, narratology, psychoanalysis), distills a method of analysis from it, and then analyzes a contemporary American movie. The text then goes beyond traditional theory by analyzing the same movie using a more current theory and method (e.g. new media theory, deconstruction, cognitivism).

[American Cinema in the Shadow of 9/11](#) Wayne State University Press

A lively and engaging study of on-screen and off-screen performances of masculinity, focusing on well-known male actors in American film and popular culture in the 1990s and 2000s. Peberdy examines specific social, cultural, historical and political contexts that have affected age, race, sexuality and fatherhood on screen.

**Resisting Neoliberalism?** McFarland

Looks at how violent women characters disrupt cinematic narrative and challenge cultural ideals.

In *The Violent Woman*, Hilary Neroni brings psychoanalytically informed film theory to bear on issues of femininity, violence, and narrative in contemporary American cinema. Examining such films as *Thelma and Louise*, *Fargo*, *Natural Born Killers*, and *The Long Kiss Goodnight*, Neroni explores why American audiences are so fascinated—even excited—by cinematic representations of violent women, and what these representations reveal about violence in our society and our cinema. Neroni argues that violent women characters disrupt cinematic narrative and challenge cultural ideals, suggesting how difficult it is for Hollywood—the greatest of ideology machines—to integrate the violent woman into its typical narrative structure. Hilary Neroni is Associate Professor of English at the University of Vermont.

[Latin American Cinema](#) A&C Black

*Engaging Film Criticism* examines recent American cinema in relationship to its «imaginative intertexts», films from earlier decades that engage similar political and cultural themes. This historical encounter provides an unexpected and exciting way of reading popular contemporary films. Eclectic pairings include the Schwarzenegger action film *True Lies* with the Hitchcock classic *North by Northwest*, as well as the lampooned Will Smith comedy *Wild, Wild West* with Buster Keaton's silent feature *The General*. Using a theoretically and historically informed brand of criticism, *Engaging Film Criticism* suggests that today's Hollywood cinema is every bit as worthy of study as the classics.

[Women's Filmmaking and Contemporary American Independent Cinema](#) Peter Lang

As studio bosses, directors, and actors, Jews have been heavily involved in film history and vitally involved in all aspects of film production. Yet Jewish characters have been represented onscreen in stereotypical and disturbing ways, while Jews have also helped to produce some of the most troubling stereotypes of people of color in Hollywood film history. In *Hollywood's Chosen People: The Jewish Experience in American Cinema*, leading scholars consider the complex relationship between Jews and the film industry, as Jews have helped to construct Hollywood's vision of the American dream and American collective identity and have in turn been shaped by those representations. Editors Daniel Bernardi, Murray Pomerance, and Hava Tirosh-Samuelsen introduce the volume with an overview of the history of Jews in American popular culture and the American film industry. Multidisciplinary contributors go on to discuss topics such as early Jewish films and directors, institutionalized anti-Semitism, Jewish identity and gossip culture, and issues of Jewish performance on film. Contributors draw on a diverse sampling of films, from representations of the Holocaust on film to screen comedy; filmmakers and writers, including David Mamet, George Cukor, Sidney Lumet, Edward Sloman, and Steven Spielberg; and stars, like Barbra Streisand, Adam Sandler, and Ben Stiller. The Jewish experience in American cinema reveals much about the degree to which Jews have been integrated into and contribute to the making of American popular film culture. Scholars of Jewish studies, film studies, American history, and American culture as well as anyone interested in film history will find this volume fascinating reading.