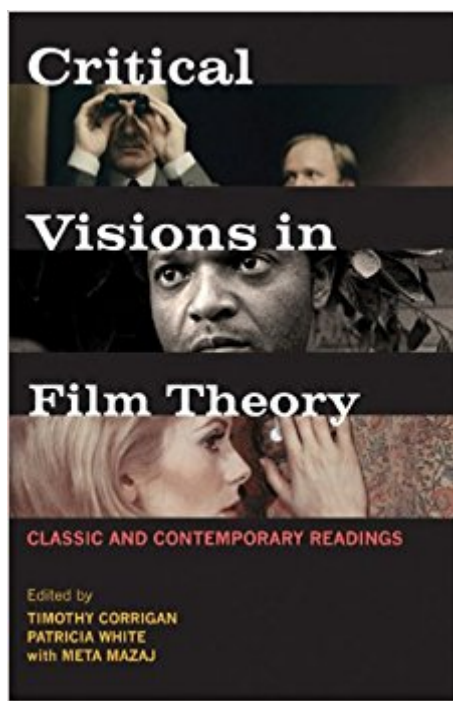


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Critical Visions In Film Theory



Synopsis

Critical Visions in Film Theory is a new book for a new generation, embracing groundbreaking approaches in the field without ignoring the history of classical film theory. The study of film theory has changed dramatically over the past 30 years with innovative ways of looking at classic debates in areas like film form, genre, and authorship, as well as exciting new conversations on such topics as race, gender and sexuality, and new media. Until now, no film theory anthology has stepped forward to represent this broader, more inclusive perspective. Critical Visions also provides the best guidance for students, giving them the context and the tools they need to critically engage with theory and apply it to their film experiences.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A guide to what's wrong not only with film studies, but with much of the study of the other arts and humanities in the contemporary American university, including the one in which I teach. Sensory experiences are turned into ideas, themes, and theories. Personal expression is turned into cultural manifestation. The unsystematic, idiosyncratic excitements and insights of art are turned into generalizations about race, class, gender, ideology, and culture. Art becomes "representation"--in both senses of the word. The mystery, the thrill of encountering unclassifiable, idiosyncratic genius is schematized, systematized, psychoanalyzed, and sociologized. Greatness is blithely, blandly undone by twentieth-century mediocrity. Works that were meant as replies to fashion are reduced to intellectual fashion statements. Expression is academicized. Welcome to the typical film studies program in the typical American university. Thrilling, unsettling experiences are transformed into

predictable, prefabricated, received ideas. It's the students, of course, who are the real losers. They are being cheated, being denied the joys, the discoveries, the mysteries of art by professors who only discover in works of art the political and ideological sermons they themselves have already hidden under the stones they lift. Art becomes a form of affirmative action (or is criticized for not being affirmative action). The students, poor trusting believing innocent souls, are being told that art is about power, culture, psychology, gender, "otherness," and a hundred other affirmative action, social justice projects, when art actually begins where these categories and these externalized understandings of experience prove insufficient. (Life is not about power, equality or, yuk, "representation).

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