Cinemas of the Mind: A Critical History of Film Theory


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Abstract

Film theory is one of the most fascinating recent adventures of human thought. The compelling medium of cinema has provoked a wide range of directors, writers and thinkers to engage in vigorous debate about its relationship to art, morality, psychology, politics and philosophy. This Critical History vividly reconstructs and intervenes in that debate. It combines key extracts from the major works of film theory with in-depth analysis and trenchant critique, and argues for a revitalised understanding of the relationship of film to reality in the wake of postmodernism.

Item Type: Edited Book

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Last Modified: 25 May 2012 10:39

URL: http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/26157

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With all this in mind, the nine critical propositions on binge-watching put forward by Tanya Horeck, Mareike Jenner, and Tina Kendall in a recent issue of Critical Studies in Television offer an instructive account of the unprecedented changes in viewer behavior we’ve seen in recent years. Nodding to the medium’s history of being left on as background noise, these low-intensity binges are a natural outgrowth of the auto-play function and the easy-to-digest content Netflix in particular is increasingly producing: cheap reality shows, cooking bonanzas, stand-up specials, and a wealth of assorted documentary content. University of Illinois Press on behalf of the University Film & Video Association. Television Studies Goes Digital. By: James Bennett. Cognitive film theory, as its advocates often point out, is not actually a unified theory of film. Rather, it is a research tradition—one that originated in the 1980s with the work of a handful of scholars and today boasts a scholarly society, an annually held international conference, and a dedicated journal. In part, cognitive film theory emerged as a reaction against and a critique of the psychoanalytic-semiotic theoretical paradigm that then dominated the discipline. Relatedly, cognitive film theory proposed and began to develop alternative accounts of various elements of the film viewing ... Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy, and Cognitive Science.