

In chapter 4, Breger examines three films that are grounded in a realist aesthetic: Michael Haneke's *Das weiße Band* (*The White Ribbon*, 2009), Gianfranco Rosi's *Fuocoammare* (*Fire at Sea*, 2016), and Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Biutiful* (2010). In her approach to these films, she once again focuses on the simultaneity of group violence and collective solidarity. In her analysis of the documentary *Fire at Sea*, for example, Breger notes how Rosi carefully presents two separate worlds that exist in parallel to each other on the Italian island of Lampedusa. The film aesthetically isolates the images and narrative of the island locals, affected by geographic isolation and economic precarity, from those that depict the African migrants who, after having crossed the Mediterranean, are held in a facility and barred from entering Europe. Rosi leaves the connections between the two groups unredeemed. Breger contends that this invites spectators to sense how the locals and the migrants are both affected by the unequal distribution of what is, in essence, their shared vulnerability. In so doing, she argues, the film reimagines the ethical stakes of inhabiting the world collectively.

Breger's epilogue provides an analysis of Deniz Gamze Ergüven's *Mustang* (2015), which centers around the struggle of five orphaned sisters against the violent patriarchal customs of their adopted family in rural Turkey. Breger sees Ergüven's drama as a model of fictional collectivity that inflects ongoing political conflicts. In her interpretation of *Mustang*, she shows how Ergüven embeds coded visual references to the Gezi Park protests of 2013 within the five sisters' bodily gestures of solidarity and collective resistance, thus opening the film's fictional world to recent political events. This concluding analysis once again reiterates the affective modes by which cinema assembles collectivity amid sociopolitical conflicts.

Breger's commitment to political openness, affective plurality, and the collective worldmaking possibilities of film position her study as a vital contribution to and beyond the field of European cinema. *Making Worlds* is crucial for anyone attempting to reimagine how contemporary film and media can advance the collective responsibility of building and belonging to a common world in the face of the divisive political negativity that overwhelms the present.

BOOK DATA Claudia Breger, *Making Worlds: Affect and Collectivity in Contemporary European Cinema*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020. \$105 cloth; \$35 paper; \$34.99 e-book. 344 pages.

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## MARTIN L. JOHNSON

### *Everyday Movies: Portable Film Projectors and the Transformation of American Culture* by Haidee Watson

In the 1970s and early 1980s, when the academic discipline of film studies was still young, budding scholars readily took to making the grandest claims for motion pictures. In 1975, Robert Sklar argued in *Movie-Made America*, his pioneering study of movies and American culture, that the film industry was distinct from other major industries because it was created by people who were at the margins, not the center, of existing social and cultural institutions. Stephen Heath, one of the foremost proponents of "apparatus" theory, suggested in 1981 in *Questions of Cinema* that the cinema was an institution uniquely adept at forming and fixing its spectator-subject in order to maintain capitalist ideology. And, of course, Laura Mulvey famously suggested that destroying the "male gaze" of classical Hollywood cinema was necessary to liberating motion pictures, and perhaps society itself, from patriarchal control.

For these scholars, the cinema was a powerful but rare thing: an apparatus reliant on a darkened theater; a projected, larger-than-life image; and an audience held rapt before the screen. In their view, the cinema was designed to be set apart from everyday life and yet, somehow, encapsulate all of it, making movies, a popular art form, attractive to ideologues and aesthetes alike.

Haidee Wasson's smart, readable, and well-timed book *Everyday Movies: Portable Film Projectors and the Transformation of American Culture* is the latest in a series of books, edited collections, and journal articles to underscore that what scholars thought the cinema *was* in the early years of the discipline was in fact just a sliver of its scale and reach. For every ideologically laden John Ford film, there were a dozen films made by the Ford Motor Company, each pushing corporate America's positions on capitalism and labor. If classical Hollywood films encouraged audiences to adhere to social and behavioral codes, educational films one-upped them by ensuring that their messages were more direct—and, in many situations, required viewing for audiences of impressionable young people. These "other" cinemas of churches, schools, factories, military bases, and fairgrounds, which the motion-picture trade magazines grouped under the heading of "nontheatrical film venues," were just as significant as commercial, and theatrical, movies—if not more so.

Wasson situates her study of the nontheatrical (a term she rejects because she believes it negatively frames the

field) by focusing on one of its defining qualities: its portability. In a narrow sense, *Everyday Movies* is a history of portable projectors, and the versatile screening environments they enabled across a wide range of institutions. For Wasson, these small, lightweight, versatile, and tough projectors were “integral to evolving small-media ecosystems that evinced commitments to improvisation, adaptability, and shifting applications” (8). In their absence, cinema would have been restricted to a few expensively appointed spaces, never allowed to flourish outside the walled gardens of the Hollywood-sanctioned movie theater.

Early in the book, Wasson makes an important break from much of the existing scholarship on the topic by emphasizing that portable projectors were not developed to counter Hollywood cinema. Rather, small-gauge equipment was developed in partnership with the industry to “improve the experience and application of moving image technologies in general, and technologies of projection in particular” (41). While the history of small-gauge equipment has been told before, including by Wasson, here she focuses on a critical, yet overlooked, player in this history: the Society for Motion Picture Engineers (SMPE). This organization was formed in 1916 to serve as a laboratory for the development and standardization of new film technologies, ensuring, as much as feasibly possible, that cinema would continue to be an interoperable and adaptable technology. While Eastman Kodak is credited with developing the dominant small-gauge film standards in the United States—16 mm in 1923 and 8 mm in 1932—SMPE helped ensure that these gauges would be successful in their own right and, just as importantly, not compete with Hollywood.

By centering her research on a professional organization, Wasson is able to tell a story of early small-gauge film cultures that eschews much of the romanticization found in Eastman Kodak’s own publicity materials and in enthusiast publications like *Amateur Movie Makers* (later shortened to *Movie Makers*). As Wasson reminds the reader, small-gauge equipment was made for institutional users, not aspiring amateur filmmakers. Just as importantly, Wasson devotes considerable time to discussing small-gauge film’s other competitive advantage—its nonflammability. While flammable 35 mm nitrate film was governed by a host of safety regulations, “safety” small-gauge film could be handled by anyone. By setting up portable projection as a technical problem to be solved, Wasson is able to show how its solutions enabled certain kinds of uses of cinema, and foreclosed on others, particularly those that would seek to replicate Hollywood’s distinct—and increasingly expensive—mode of screen entertainment.

In the middle section of the book, Wasson turns to two case studies—the 1939 New York World’s Fair and the US military use of 16 mm film during the Second World War—to underscore the versatility of portable cinemas in the 1930s and 1940s. In her study of the world’s fair, Wasson documents just how many screens were present at the fair, both in more-conventional, theater-like settings and utilized as components of the screen architecture that helped the fair live up to its promise of offering “The World of Tomorrow,” as its theme promised. In one telling detail, Wasson reminds her readers that even RCA’s famous demonstration of the power of broadcast television utilized 16 mm film and a local transmitter at the Queens fairgrounds, just in case the signal from Radio City Music Hall, in midtown Manhattan, was not clear enough.

Wasson uses her case study of the 1939 fair to underscore the diversity of motion pictures that were displayed using portable projectors. While fairs are an exceptional environment, Wasson shows how a wide range of motion-picture technologies, including rear projection, 3D, and sound film, were deployed at the fair and utilized to showcase such emergent film genres as industrial films, made on behalf of automobile manufacturers.

Next, Wasson turns to the military’s deployment of 16 mm projectors during the second world war. Once again, by focusing on the equipment itself—in this case, the JAN (Joint Army Navy) protocol used to standardize 16 mm projectors—Wasson is able to connect portable-camera technologies across a multiplicity of uses. For example, she points out that the spectacular curved wide-screen Cinerama format was first developed for wartime use—one of many military technologies to be domesticated in the postwar 1950s.

The final sections of *Everyday Movies* aim to reconnect portable projectors to broader social and technological changes in the mid-twentieth century. While 16 mm film was in wide use before the war, Wasson shows that wartime production helped to ensure that film would be seen as a necessary device for any modern institution. By 1969, there were 875 small-gauge projectors for every motion-picture theater in the United States—a statistic that reveals, as Wasson notes, both the movie theater’s decline and the ascendancy of small-gauge screens.

The challenge of writing about portable projection is implicit in the subject itself. No matter how much one tries, it remains difficult to fix the boundaries of nontheatrical cinema—a phenomenon whose very definition suggests plentitude, shape-shifting, and mobility. And yet, in this rich, concise, and generously footnoted book, Wasson

has collected and augmented a generation of scholarship, delivering a definitive accounting of the rise of small-gauge film cultures in the United States. Through meticulous research, sophisticated argumentation, and a strong sense of what was truly significant about portable cinema, Wasson has written a book that will help ensure, from now on, that film historians, theorists, and students think of the cinema as belonging not just to the theater, but also to the portable projectors that made movies possible everywhere they went.

BOOK DATA. Haidee Wasson, *Everyday Movies: Portable Film Projectors and the Transformation of American Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020. \$85 cloth; \$29.95 paper; \$29.95 e-book. 288 pages.

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## JESSICA SCARLATA

### ***Women in the Irish Film Industry: Stories and Storytellers* edited by Susan Liddy**

Susan Liddy's edited collection *Women in the Irish Film Industry* brings together fifteen essays and interviews, plus an editor's introduction and conclusion, that address in detail the issue of gender parity in the Irish film industry. As Liddy explains in her introduction, the book aims to place questions of female and feminist representation at the core of how the Irish film industry imagines itself (11–12). Representation here refers not only to audiovisual or narrative representation, but to the extent to which women occupy the lead creative roles in filmmaking, the visibility of women-made films in festivals, and the presence of women in decisions about film funding. While Screen Ireland (formerly the Irish Film Board) plays a prominent role in discussions of financing, the book is not solely focused on national funding, nor is it exclusively about women filmmakers in the Republic of Ireland; some of the women live, work, or have made films in Northern Ireland, Britain, Eastern Europe, and the United States. Thus, rather than focus on the extensively debated question of what constitutes Irish national cinema, the book allows an understanding of "Irish" to emerge across fifteen essays. This conception is fluid, flexible, and culturally distinct, as well as connected to the film cultures and industries of the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

*Women in the Irish Film Industry* provides qualitative and quantitative evidence for what it shows to be a stark lack of women in the roles of producer, director, cinematographer,

and editor in documentary, fiction, and animated filmmaking. Its contributors consider an array of ways in which women might be *in* the Irish film industry, and in so doing expands the field of vision concerning women's work in cinema: in filmmaking, in policy and funding decisions, in festival programming, and in education. Several of the essays bring to the foreground women whose work is often marginalized within or excluded from previous studies of Irish film that might be more familiar to non-Irish readers. This fact makes it especially enlightening for US readers, since films by Irish women are rarely accessible here.

The book is divided into four sections. In the first, "Revisiting the Past," Díóg O'Connell's essay on Ellen O'Mara Sullivan's relationship with the Film Company of Ireland, which produced the silent-era *Willy Reilly and His Colleen Bawn* (John MacDonagh, 1920) along with nearly thirty other films between 1916 and 1920, considers questions of feminist historiography and the absence of women in the archives. From there, the book moves to the 1980s and Northern Ireland, with Sarah Edge's "Feminist Reclamation Politics: Reclaiming *Maeve* (Pat Murphy, 1981) and *Mother Ireland* (Anne Crilly, 1988)," which considers both films in relation to feminism and Irish nationalism.

In the opening essay of the second section, "Practitioners and Production Culture," Liddy addresses the experiences of women filmmakers in Ireland, considering patriarchal power in the industry in relation to a range of concerns, including the "myth of the male genius." That critique is implicitly carried into Laura Canning's essay "Irish Production Cultures and Women Filmmakers: Nicky Gogan," which, in critiquing auteurist approaches, makes the point that "considering the producer *as* a filmmaker allows us to move away from masculinist-auteurist frameworks and centre instead ... the unexamined work of women who have built sustainable careers in Irish film" (68). In examining Gogan's work as producer, Canning also gives detailed attention to funding resources and criteria. The challenge to auteurism and its role in eclipsing women filmmakers is continued in Maeve Connolly's essay on cinematographers Suzie Lavelle and Kate McCullough. Connolly not only looks at the work produced by each woman; she also marks, as professional work, "the labour of professional self-representation" (86), addressing the ways that "the culture of production has a direct impact upon the form of the finished work" (91), and opening an important avenue for thinking about women in film.

Liddy's subsequent interview with multiple-award-winning editor and director Emer Reynolds marks another important creative role—editor—and provides a space