

Edited by
Steve Neale

ROUTLEDGE



The
Classical
HOLLYWOOD
Reader

The Classical Hollywood Reader

The Classical Hollywood Reader brings together essential readings to provide a history of Hollywood from the 1910s to the mid-1960s.

Following on from a Prologue that discusses the aesthetic characteristics of Classical Hollywood films, Part I covers the period between the 1910s and the mid- to late 1920s. It deals with the advent of feature-length films in the US and the growing national and international dominance of the companies responsible for their production, distribution and exhibition. In doing so, it also deals with film making practices, aspects of style, the changing roles played by women in an increasingly business-oriented environment, and the different audiences in the US for which Hollywood sought to cater.

Part II covers the period between the coming of sound in the mid-1920s and the beginnings of the demise of the 'studio system' in the late 1940s. In doing so it deals with the impact of sound on films and film production in the US and Europe, the subsequent impact of the Depression and World War II on the industry and its audiences, the growth of unions, and the roles played by production managers and film stars at the height of the studio era.

Part III deals with aspects of style, censorship, technology and film production. It includes articles on the Production Code, music and sound, cinematography and the often neglected topic of animation.

Part IV covers the period between 1946 and 1966. It deals with the demise of the studio system and the advent of independent production. In an era of demographic and social change, it looks at the growth of drive-in theatres, the impact of television, the advent of new technologies, the increasing importance of international markets, the Hollywood blacklist, the rise in art house imports and in overseas production, and the eventual demise of the Production Code.

Designed especially for courses on Hollywood Cinema, the Reader includes a number of newly researched and written chapters and a series of introductions to each of its parts. It concludes with an epilogue, a list of resources for further research and an extensive bibliography.

Steve Neale is Professor and Chair in Film Studies in the School of English at Exeter University, where he teaches Introduction to Film, Hollywood and Europe, Comedy, Comedians and Romance, and Film Noir. He is an internationally renowned film studies scholar. His research focuses principally on history and theory of Hollywood cinema and he has published several publications in these areas. Since 2004, Professor Neale has been the Academic Director for the Bill Douglas Centre for the History of Cinema and Popular Culture.

The Classical Hollywood Reader

Edited by

Steve Neale

First published 2012
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2012 editorial and selection matter Steve Neale; individual
chapters the contributors

The right of Steve Neale to be identified as editor of this work has been
asserted by him in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright,
Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised
in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter
invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or
retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks,
and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
The classical Hollywood reader / edited by Steve Neale.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Motion pictures—California—Los Angeles—History—20th century. I. Neale, Stephen,
1950-

PN1993.5.U65C565 2012
384'.80979494—dc23

2011038750

ISBN: 978-0-415-57672-7 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-0-415-57674-1 (pbk)

Typeset in Perpetua and Bell Gothic
by RefineCatch Limited, Bungay, Suffolk

For Karen

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	xi
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xix
<i>Permissions</i>	xxi
Steve Neale	
INTRODUCTION	1
1 Patrick Keating	
PROLOGUE: EMOTIONAL CURVES AND LINEAR NARRATIVES	6
PART I	
Feature films, Hollywood and the advent of the studio system, 1912–26	21
2 Gerben Bakker	
THE QUALITY RACE: FEATURE FILMS AND MARKET DOMINANCE IN THE US AND EUROPE IN THE 1910s	31
3 Richard Koszarski	
MAKING MOVIES, 1915–28	43
4 Kristin Thompson	
THE LIMITS OF EXPERIMENTATION IN HOLLYWOOD	61
5 Karen Ward Mahar	
“DOING A ‘MAN’S WORK’”: THE RISE OF THE STUDIO SYSTEM AND THE REMASCULINIZATION OF FILMMAKING	79
6 Lea Jacobs and Andrea Comiskey	
HOLLYWOOD’S CONCEPTION OF ITS AUDIENCE IN THE 1920s	94

PART II		
Sound and the studio system, 1926–46		111
7	Douglas Gomery THE COMING OF SOUND: TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE IN THE AMERICAN FILM INDUSTRY	123
8	Ginette Vincendeau HOLLYWOOD BABEL: THE COMING OF SOUND AND THE MULTIPLE LANGUAGE VERSION	137
9	Howard T. Lewis ORGANIZATION	147
10	Thomas Schatz HOLLYWOOD: THE TRIUMPH OF THE STUDIO SYSTEM	167
11	Mark Glancy and John Sedgwick CINEMAGOING IN THE UNITED STATES IN THE MID-1930s: A STUDY BASED ON THE <i>VARIETY</i> DATASET	179
12	Tino Balio SELLING STARS: THE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE	209
PART III		
Representation, technology, production and style, 1926–46		227
13	Richard Maltby THE PRODUCTION CODE AND THE MYTHOLOGIES OF 'PRE-CODE' HOLLYWOOD	237
14	Helen Hanson and Steve Neale COMMANDING THE SOUNDS OF THE UNIVERSE: CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD SOUND IN THE 1930s AND EARLY 1940s	249
15	Kathryn Kalinak THE CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD FILM SCORE	262
16	Patrick Keating SHOOTING FOR SELZNICK: CRAFT AND COLLABORATION IN HOLLYWOOD CINEMATOGRAPHY	280
17	Scott Higgins ORDER AND PLENITUDE: TECHNICOLOR AESTHETICS IN THE CLASSICAL ERA	296
18	Mark Langer THE DISNEY–FLEISCHER DILEMMA: PRODUCT DIFFERENTIATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION	310
PART IV		
Postwar Hollywood and the end of the studio system, 1946–66		321
19	Janet Staiger INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS COLLECTIVISM: THE SHIFT TO INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION IN THE US FILM INDUSTRY	331
20	Sheldon Hall OZONERS, ROADSHOWS AND BLITZ EXHIBITIONISM: POSTWAR DEVELOPMENTS IN DISTRIBUTION AND EXHIBITION	343

21	John Belton	GLORIOUS TECHNICOLOR, BREATHTAKING CINEMASCOPE AND STEREOPHONIC SOUND	355
22	Janet Wasko	HOLLYWOOD AND TELEVISION IN THE 1950s: THE ROOTS OF DIVERSIFICATION	370
23	Brian Neve	HOLLYWOOD AND POLITICS IN THE 1940S AND 1950s	389
24	Steve Neale	ARTIES AND IMPORTS, EXPORTS AND RUNAWAYS, ADULT FILMS AND EXPLOITATION	399
	Steve Neale	EPILOGUE	412
	<i>Bibliography</i>		415
	<i>Index</i>		441

Illustrations

Figures

4.1	Frame enlargement from <i>The Yellow Girl</i> (1915), directed by Edgar M. Keller, with Corinne Griffith and Florence Vidor	64
4.2	Frame enlargement from <i>The Blue Bird</i> (1918), directed by Maurice Tourneur	65
4.3	Frame enlargement from <i>Camille</i> (1921), directed by Ray C. Smallwood	67
4.4	Frame enlargement from <i>The Old Swimmin' Hole</i> (1921), directed by Joseph De Grasse	69
4.5	Frame enlargement from <i>Greed</i> (1925), directed by Erich von Stroheim	71
4.6	Frame enlargement from <i>Beggar on Horseback</i> (1925), directed by James Cruze	74
16.1	<i>Since You Went Away</i> (1944), directed by John Cromwell	286
16.2	<i>The Prisoner of Zenda</i> (1937), directed by John Cromwell	288
16.3	<i>The Prisoner of Zenda</i> (1937), directed by John Cromwell	290
16.4	<i>Intermezzo</i> (1939), directed by Gregory Ratoff	290
16.5	<i>Portrait of Jennie</i> (1948), directed by William Dieterle	293

Tables

2.1	Profits of Pathé Frères, in dollars, 1911–19	39
3.1	"Average cost" estimates, 1917	48
3.2	Universal Film Manufacturing Co., Pacific Coast Studios. Statement of production costs for week ending 2–1–22	49
3.3	Universal Film Manufacturing Co., Pacific Coast Studios, daily memorandum picture costs	50
11.1	The fifty top earning films in the data sample	183
11.2	The leading production companies	188
11.3	The top attractions in Pittsburgh	194
11.4	The top attractions in Detroit	195

xii ILLUSTRATIONS

11.5	The top attractions in Minneapolis	196
11.6	Appendix: the sample cinema set for the period October 1934 to October 1936	200

Exhibits

9.1	Production Department, Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation, 1929	148
9.2	Production program of Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation for 1929–30, as classified for distribution	152
9.3	Organization of Sales Department of Pathé Exchange, Incorporated	156
9.4	Exchange Organization of Pathé Exchange, Incorporated	157
9.5	Theater organization chart	163

Notes on contributors

Gerben Bakker is Assistant Professor in Economic History and Accounting at the London School of Economics. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and has acted as Special Advisor on the film industry for the House of Lords and as consultant on the creative industries for the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. He has published extensively on the evolution of the film and music industries in journals such as the *Economic History Review*, *Business History*, *Business History Review* and *Enterprise and Society* and is the author of *Entertainment Industrialised: The Emergence of the International Film Industry, 1890–1940* (2008).

Tino Balio is Emeritus Professor of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the author or editor of seven books, including a two-volume history of United Artists (1976 and 1998), *The American Film Industry* (1976 and 1985), *Hollywood in the Age of Television* (1990), *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930–1939* (1996) and *The Foreign Renaissance on American Screens, 1946–1973* (2010), which was funded by the inaugural Academy Film Scholar Grant awarded by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2001.

John Belton is Professor of English and Film at Rutgers University. He is the author of five books, among them *Cinema Stylists* (1995), *Widescreen Cinema* (1992) and *American Cinema/American Culture* (1994), editor of *Alfred Hitchcock's Rear Window* (2001), and co-editor of *Film Sound: Theory and Practice* (with Elisabeth Weis) (1985) and *Widescreen Worldwide* (with Sheldon Hall and Steve Neale) (2010). He is also editor of the Film and Culture book series at Columbia University Press and associate editor of *Film History*, and has been the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and an American Fellows grant to study digital cinema and motion picture colour, respectively.

Andrea Comiskey is a PhD Candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she is a coordinating editor of *The Velvet Light Trap*. She has contributed essays to *Post Script* and *Riddle Me This, Batman!: Essays on the Universe of the Dark Knight* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011).

Mark Glancy teaches film history at Queen Mary University in London. He is the author of *When Hollywood Loved Britain* (1999), *The 39 Steps: A British Film Guide* (2003), and co-editor of *The New Film History: Sources, Methods, Approaches* (with James Chapman and Sue Harper) (2007). He is currently writing *Hollywood and the Americanization of Britain*.

Douglas Gomery retired in 2005 to serve as the Resident Scholar at the Library of American Broadcasting at the University of Maryland and to serve as Official Historian for Celebrating Patsy Cline Inc. He is the author of numerous books and articles on the coming of sound, the Hollywood studio system, film exhibition, and various other aspects of the American film industry and its history.

Sheldon Hall is a Senior Lecturer in Stage and Screen Studies at Sheffield Hallam University. He is the author of *Zulu: With Some Guts Behind It* (2005), co-author of *Epics, Spectacles and Blockbusters: A Hollywood History* (with Steve Neale) (2010) and co-editor (with John Belton and Steve Neale) of *Widescreen Worldwide* (2010), and has contributed numerous articles on American and British cinema to journals and books.

Helen Hanson is a Senior Lecturer in Film Studies at Exeter University. She is the author of *Hollywood Heroines: Women in Film Noir and the Female Gothic Film* (2007), co-editor (with Catherine O'Rawe) of *The Femme Fatale: Images, Histories, Contexts* (2010) and (with Andrew Spicer) of *The Blackwell Companion to Film Noir* (forthcoming). She has published essays on sound in *Music, Sound and the Moving Image* journal (2007) and *Film Moments: Criticism, History, Theory* (2011).

Scott Higgins is Associate Professor at Wesleyan University, where he teaches courses on the history, theory and aesthetics of film. He is author of *Harnessing the Technicolor Rainbow: Color Design in the 1930s* (2007) and editor of *Arnheim for Film and Media Studies* (2010), and is currently working on a book about sound serials entitled *Matinee Melodrama*.

Lea Jacobs teaches film history and aesthetics in the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the author of *The Wages of Sin: Censorship and the Fallen Woman Film* (1997) and *The Decline of Sentiment: American Film in the 1920s* (2008), and co-author of *Theatre to Cinema* (with Ben Brewster) (1998). She is currently working on *Trapped in Time: Film Rhythm and Tempo After Sound*.

Kathryn Kalinak is Professor of English and Film Studies at Rhode Island College. She has taught courses on the Hollywood film score at a number of other institutions, among them USC, UCLA and the University of California at Santa Barbara. In addition to a number of scholarly articles, she has authored *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (1982), *How the West was Sung: Music in the Westerns of John Ford* (2007) and *Film Music: A Very Short Introduction* (2010). She is the editor of *Music in the Western: Notes on the Frontier* (2011) and is currently working on a study of the collaboration between Dimitri Tiomkin and Howard Hawks.

Patrick Keating is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at Trinity University, where he teaches courses on Film and Media Studies. He is the author of *Hollywood Lighting from the Silent Era to Film Noir* (2010), which won the Best First Book Award from the Society of Cinema and Media Studies.

Richard Koszarski is a Professor of English at Rutgers University. He is the editor of *Hollywood Directors, 1914–1940* (1977) and *Mystery of the Wax Museum* (1979), and author of *Fort Lee: The Film Town* (2004) and *Hollywood on the Hudson: Film and Television in New York from Griffith to Sarnoff* (2008), as well as two award-winning books, *The Man You Loved to Hate: Erich Von Stroheim and Hollywood* (1983) and *An Evening's Entertainment: The Age of the Silent Feature Picture, 1915–1928* (1994). He has been the recipient of the Prix Jean Mitry from the Giornate del Cinema Muto and is editor-in-chief of *Film History*.

Mark Langer teaches Film Studies at the School for Studies in Art and Culture at Carleton University. His articles have appeared in anthologies and in periodicals such as *Cinema Journal* and *Animation Journal* and *Screen*, and the article reprinted here was a winner of the Norman McLaren/Evelyn Lambart Award for the best scholarly article on animation. He has curated animation retrospectives for museums and festivals, among them the Museum of Modern Art, the Ottawa International Film Festival and the Cinémathèque Française, and is currently President of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations.

Howard T. Lewis was Professor of Marketing at the Harvard Business School before becoming an Assistant Dean and, in 1936, Director of the School's Bureau of Business Research. He was the author of books such as *Industrial Purchasing* (1933), as well as *Cases on the Motion Picture Industry* (1930) and *The Motion Picture Industry* (1933).

Karen Ward Mahar is an Associate Professor of History and co-director of the American Studies programme at Siena College in Lodonville, New York. Her first book, *Women Filmmakers in Early Hollywood* (2006), examined the American film industry as a workplace for women in the silent era. She is currently working on a comparative study of gender and corporate power in the US and UK in the mid-twentieth century.

Richard Maltby is Professor of Screen Studies and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Humanities and Law at Flinders University, South Australia. He is the author of *Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction* (2003) and co-editor of 'Film Europe' and 'Film America': *Cinema, Commerce and Cultural Exchange, 1920–1939* (with Andrew Higson) (1999), *Going to the Movies: Hollywood and the Social Experience of Cinema* (with Melvyn Stokes and Robert C. Allen) (2007), and *Cinema, Audiences and Modernity: European Perspectives on Film Cultures and Cinema-going* (with Daniel Biltereyst and Philippe Meers), *Explorations in New Cinema History: Approaches and Case Studies* (with Daniel Biltereyst and Philippe Meers) and *The New Cinema History: A Guide to Resources* (with Kate Bowles, Deb Verhoeven and Mike Walsh) (all 2011). He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities, Series Editor of the Exeter Studies in Film History series, and author of over 50 articles and essays.

Steve Neale is Professor of Film Studies at the University of Exeter. He is the author of *Genre and Hollywood* (2000), co-author of *Popular Film and Television Comedy* (with Frank Krutnik) (1990) and *Epics, Spectacles and Blockbusters: A Hollywood History* (with Sheldon Hall) (2010), editor of *Genre and Contemporary Hollywood* (2002), and co-editor of 'Un-American' *Hollywood: Politics and Film in the Blacklist Era* (with Frank Krutnik, Brian Neve and Peter Stanfield) (2007) and *Widescreen Worldwide* (with John Belton and Sheldon Hall) (2010). He co-edits the Exeter Studies in Film History series with Richard Maltby.

Brian Neve teaches politics and film in the Department of Politics, Languages and International Studies at the University of Bath. He is the author of *Film and Politics in America: A Social Tradition* (1997) and *Elia Kazan: The Cinema of an American Outsider* (2009), and co-editor

of *'Un-American' Hollywood: Politics and Film in the Blacklist Era* (with Frank Krutnik, Brian Neve and Peter Stanfield) (2007). He is currently working on a book on Cy Endfield and the European blacklist diaspora.

Thomas Schatz is Professor in the Radio-Television-Film Department at the University of Texas at Austin. He has written books on American film (and edited many others), including *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (1989) and *Boom and Bust: American Cinema in the 1940s* (1997). His writing on film has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Premiere*, *The Nation*, *Film Comment*, *Film Quarterly* and many other publications. He is the long-time editor of the Film and Media Studies series for University of Texas Press and is currently writing a book-length study of contemporary conglomerate Hollywood.

John Sedgwick is Professor of Film Economics and Director of the Centre for International Business and Sustainability at London Metropolitan University. He researches the economic history of film and has published articles in *Business History*, *Economic History Review*, *Explorations in Economic History*, the *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, the *Journal of Cultural Economics* and the *Journal of Economic History*, as well as numerous book chapters – many co-authored with Mike Pokorny. He has also published a monograph on the film industry in Britain in the 1930s and edited an anthology of papers. He was a Leverhulme Research Fellow in 2000, a Menzies Research Fellow in 2006 and an RMIT/AFTRS Visiting Research Fellow in 2007.

Janet Staiger is the William P. Hobby Centennial Professor of Communication in the Department of Radio-Television-Film at the University of Texas at Austin. Her books include *Political Emotions* (co-edited with Ann Cvetkovich and Ann Reynolds) (2010), *Convergence Media History* (co-edited with Sabine Hake) (2009), *Media Reception Studies* (2005), *Authorship and Film* (co-edited with David Gerstner) (2003), *Perverse Spectators: The Practices of Film Reception* (2000), *Blockbuster TV: Must-see Sitcoms in the Network Era* (2000), *Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in the Early American Cinema* (1995), *Interpreting Films: Studies in the Historical Reception of American Cinema* (1992) and *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (with David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson) (1985).

Kristin Thompson is an Honorary Fellow in the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the co-author of numerous editions of *Film Art: An Introduction* and *Film History: An Introduction* (with David Bordwell), and of *The Classical Hollywood: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (with David Bordwell and Janet Staiger) (1985). Her most recent books are *Storytelling in the New Hollywood: Understanding Classical Narrative Technique* (1999), *The Frodo Franchise: The Lord of the Rings and Modern Hollywood* (2007) and *Minding Movies: Observations on the Art, Craft, and Business of Filmmaking* (with David Bordwell) (2011).

Ginette Vincendeau is Professor of Film Studies at King's College London. She has written widely on popular French and European Cinema and is a regular contributor to *Sight and Sound*. She is the author of *Pépé le Moko* (1998), *Stars and Stardom in French Cinema* (2000), *Jean-Pierre Melville: An American in Paris* (2003) and *La Haine* (2005), editor of *The Encyclopedia of French Cinema* (1995), and co-editor of *French Film: Texts and Contexts* (with Susan Hayward) (1990 and 2000), *Journeys of Desire: European Actors in Hollywood* (with Alistair Phillips) (2006) and *The New Wave: Critical Landmarks* (with Peter Graham) (2009).

Janet Wasko is the Knight Chair for Communication Research at the University of Oregon. Her work focuses on the political economy of the media and she is the author, co-author, editor and co-editor of 19 books, among them *Movies and Money: Financing the American Film Industry* (1982), *Understanding Disney; The Manufacture of Fantasy* (2001), *How Hollywood Works* (2003), *A Companion to Television* (2010), *The Contemporary Hollywood Film Industry* (with Paul McDonald) (2008) and *Media in the Age of Marketization* (with Graham Murdock) (2007). Her most recent collection is *The Handbook of Political Economy of Communications* (edited with Graham Murdock and Helena Sousa) (2011).

Acknowledgements

I would like first of all to thank Natalie Foster for inviting me to edit this Reader, and Ruth Moody, Eileen Srebernik, Lisa Williams and the team at Routledge for their hard and diligent work. I would also like to thank Gerben Bakker, Tino Balio, John Belton, Mark Glancy and John Sedgwick, Douglas Gomery, Patrick Keating, Kathryn Kalinak, Richard Koszarski, Mark Langer, Karen Ward Mahar, Thomas Schatz, Janet Staiger, Kristin Thompson, Ginette Vincendeau and Janet Wasko and their publishers for allowing me to reprint and edit their work, and Sheldon Hall, Helen Hanson, Scott Higgins, Lea Jacobs and Andrea Comiskey, Patrick Keating, Brian Neve and Richard Maltby for writing such superb contributions to this book. To gather together the work of such fine scholars has been a privilege as well as a pleasure. I would like in addition to thank the University of Exeter for granting me a term of study leave and the staff at the British Film Institute library, both those who remain and those who have been forced to leave or to retire, for all their help. The library is an important and precious resource. Without it I would have been unable to edit this volume or to research my own contributions. Finally, in addition to my colleagues at Exeter, and in addition to those listed above, I would like to pay tribute to a number of mentors, ex-colleagues and friends, among them Shelley Baker, Edward Buscombe, John Caughie, Catherine Constable, Jim Cook, Pam Cook, Christine Geraghty, the late Gerry Coubro, Elizabeth Cowie, Michael Grant, Jim Hillier, Frank Krutnik, Peter Krämer, Annette Kuhn, Colin McArthur, Robert Murphy, Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, Mike O'Pray, Douglas Pye, A. L. Rees, Tom Ryall, Murray Smith, Peter Stanfield, Sarah Street, Michael Walker, Paul Willemen and, last but by no means least, Ben Brewster, from whom I learned all I know about scholarship and aesthetics, nearly all I know about early and silent cinema, and much of what I know about the Classical Hollywood Cinema.

Permissions

The articles listed below have been reproduced with kind permission. Whilst every effort has been made to trace copyright holders, this has not been possible in all cases. Any omissions brought to our attention will be remedied in future editions.

- 1 Patrick Keating, 'Emotional Curves and Linear Narratives', *Velvet Light Trap*, No. 58 (Fall 2006), University of Texas Press, pp. 4–15. First published as the article 'Emotional Curves and Linear Narrative', by Patrick Keating, in *Velvet Light Trap*, Volume 58, pp. 4–15. Copyright © 2006 by the University of Texas Press. All rights reserved.
- 2 Gerben Bakker, 'The Quality Race: Feature Films and Market Dominance in the U.S. and Europe in the 1910s', from *Entertainment Industrialised: The Emergence of the International Film Industry, 1890–1940*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 210–28, plus bibliography. © 2008 Gerben Bakker, Published by Cambridge University Press. Reproduced with permission.
- 3 Richard Koszarski, 'Making Movies, 1915–28', edited chapter from *An Evening's Entertainment: The Age of the Silent Feature Picture*, New York: Scribners, 1990, pp. 99–137. From *History of American Cinema, V 3*. © 1990 Gale, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced with permission. www.cengage.com/permissions.
- 4 Kristin Thompson, 'The Limits of Experimentation in Hollywood' in Jan-Christopher Horak (ed.), *Lovers of Cinema: The First American Film Avant Garde, 1919–1945*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995, pp. 67–93. © 1996 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Reprinted by permission of The University of Wisconsin Press.
- 5 Karen Ward Mahar, "'Doing a Man's Work'" The Rise of the Studio System and Remasculinization of Filmmaking' from *Women Filmmakers in Early Hollywood*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, pp. 179–203, 261–68. Excerpts. © 2006 The John Hopkins University Press. Reprinted with permission of The John Hopkins University Press.
- 7 Douglas Gomery, 'The Coming of Sound: Technological Change in the American Film Industry' in Tino Balio (ed.), *The American Film Industry*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985 edition, pp. 229–51. © 1979 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Reprinted by permission of The University of Wisconsin Press.
- 8 Ginette Vincendeau, 'Hollywood Babel: The Coming of Sound and the Multiple Language Version', *Screen*, vol. 29 no. 2, Spring 1988, pp. 24–39. Copyright © 1988, Oxford University Press.

- 9 Mark Glancy and John Sedgwick, *Cinemagoing in the United States in the Mid-1930s: A Study Based on the Variety Dataset in Going to the Movies: Hollywood and the Social Experience of Cinema*, Edited by Richard Maltby, Melvyn Stokes and Robert C. Allen, University of Exeter Press 2007 pp. 155–95. © 2007 University of Exeter Press. Reproduced with permission.
- 10 Howard T. Lewis, 'Organization' from *The Motion Picture Industry*, New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1933, pp. 28–76.
- 11 Thomas Schatz, 'The Triumph of the Studio System' from 'Hollywood: The Triumph of the Studio System', Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed), *The Oxford History of World Cinema*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 220–29. © Oxford University Press 1996. By permission of Oxford University Press.
- 12 Tino Balio, 'Selling Stars', Excerpts from Balio, *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930–1939*, New York: Scribners, 1993, pp. 144–75. From Balio, *History of the American Cinema, V 5*. © Gale, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced by permission. www.cengage.com/permissions.
- 15 Kathryn Kalinak, 'The Classical Hollywood Film Score', *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992, pp. 72–109. © 1992 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Reprinted by permission of The University of Wisconsin Press.
- 16 Mark Langer, 'The Disney-Fleischer Dilemma: Product Differentiation and Technological Innovation', *Screen*, vol. 33 no. 4, Winter 1992, pp. 343–59. Excerpts. Copyright © 1992, Oxford University Press. Reprinted with permission.
- 19 Janet Staiger, 'Individualism versus Collectivism: The Shift to Independent Production in the US Film Industry', *Screen*, vol. 24 no. 4–5, July–October 1983, pp. 68–79. Copyright © 1983, Oxford University Press. Reprinted with permission.
- 21 John Belton, 'Glorious Technicolor, Breathtaking CinemaScope, and Stereophonic Sound' in Tino Balio (ed), *Hollywood in the Age of Television* (Cambridge, Mass.: Unwin Hyman, 1990), pp. 185–211. Reprinted by permission of Taylor & Francis Ltd.
- 22 Janet Wasko, 'Hollywood and Television in the 1950s: The Roots of Diversification' in Peter Lev, *The Fifties: Transforming the Screen* (New York: Scribners, 2003), pp. 127–46. From *History of the American Cinema, 1E*. © 2003 Gale, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced by permission. www.cengage.com/permissions.

Steve Neale

INTRODUCTION

BY PUBLISHING OR REPUBLISHING A SERIES of articles, chapters and extracts from a variety of different sources, this book aims to introduce its readers to the major facets of classical Hollywood cinema and its history. In doing so, it deals with issues of style and aesthetics, design and technology, censorship and regulation, organisation and management, and economics and politics. It also deals with the policies and practices of national and international film production, distribution and exhibition pursued by a small but industrially dominant group of companies from the mid-1910s to the early 1960s.

The precise configuration of these groups and the nature and names of these and other companies changed over time. First National, for example, was a major company in the 1920s but was bought out by Warner Bros. in 1929. Warner Bros. itself was a minor company until the late 1920s, when it successfully pioneered the adoption of sound. It was joined, among others, by RKO (Radio-Keith-Orpheum), which was set up by the Radio Corporation of America in 1928. The Fox Film Corporation, which was founded in 1915, became Twentieth Century-Fox when it merged with Twentieth Century Pictures in 1935. Paramount Pictures, initially a distribution company, became part of Famous Players-Lasky in 1916. Famous Players-Lasky became Paramount-Famous Lasky in 1927 then Paramount-Publix in 1930. Cohn-Brand-Cohn Film Sales became Columbia Pictures and Metro Pictures, Goldwyn Pictures Corporation and Louis B. Mayer Pictures were merged to become MGM (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) in 1924. The Universal Film Manufacturing Company became the Universal Pictures Company the following year. And so on and so forth. With the exception of United Artists, which was founded in 1919 and which distributed the films produced by its members and other independents, these companies all possessed production facilities housed in studio lots in and around Los Angeles in Southern California. These lots were staffed by artists and technicians of various kinds (cinematographers, set designers, script writers, carpenters, electricians, editors, costume designers, and so on and so forth) and were organised into departments. This was one of their distinguishing features. But it was by no means the only one.

Only three of these companies, Columbia, Paramount and RKO, possessed production facilities in the suburb of Hollywood (an area of Los Angeles now approximately bounded by Western Avenue, La Brea Avenue, Franklin Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard). However, just as 'studio' became a synonym for 'film company', so 'Hollywood' became a synonym for the

mainstream film industry in the US, a term that evoked not only the companies, their production centres, their films and their stars, but the aura of glamour that surrounded them all. In doing so, however, these synonyms only partly identified the nature, structure, location and scope of the industry and its activities. For the corporate headquarters of the studios were not in Hollywood or Southern California, but in New York. It was here that finance was raised from banks and investors, that decisions about the cost, scale and nature of each season's programme of films were taken, that publicity campaigns were mounted, that national and international distribution plans were made, and that the booking and circulation of film prints were organised. It was here, too, especially in the late 1910s, the 1920s and the early 1930s, long after its dominance as a centre of production in earlier years, that some of the films produced by some of the companies and their affiliates continued to be made. And it was here that the major companies organised the acquisition, administration and programming of their cinema chains.

As industrially oriented accounts of classical Hollywood cinema have repeatedly stressed, and as will be discussed at greater length in a number of contributions to this book, it was access to cinemas and cinema chains in key city centres and markets that provided the principal film companies with a guaranteed outlet for their films and, hence, with guaranteed income. By the late 1920s, the Big Five companies (Fox, MGM, Paramount, RKO and Warner Bros.) all owned cinemas and cinema chains. With the temporary exception of United Artists and Universal, the Little Three (which also included Columbia), did not. But they did possess national and international distribution facilities; they did subscribe to most of the principles and practices subscribed to by the Big Five (including those associated with the Production Code, Hollywood's system of self-censorship); and they did cooperate with the Big Five and the Big Five with them. The Big Five were 'vertically integrated': they were involved in all three branches of an industry (manufacture, wholesale and retail); along with the Little Three, they constituted an 'oligopoly': a group of companies that colluded to control it.

Despite tensions, minor modifications and major changes in historical circumstance (notably the advent of the Great Depression and the advent of World War Two), these structures and practices remained in place for over twenty years. After that, they were modified in more fundamental ways following anti-trust rulings by the US Supreme Court, the consequent sale of the Big Five's cinema chains, the advent of suburbanisation, the advent and spread of television and other leisure pursuits, and shrinking domestic attendances. These modifications took place during the late 1940s, the 1950s and the early 1960s. By the mid- to late 1960s, with the abandonment of the Production Code, the advent of independently owned multiplex cinemas in suburban shopping malls, the sale or scaling down of studio lots and their contents, and a series of crises, mergers and takeovers involving most of Hollywood's companies, classical Hollywood cinema was dead.

Throughout the classical era, dozens of 'classic' films – films of enduring public interest or appeal – were made. However, as we have already seen, 'classical Hollywood cinema' was more than the sum of its films (classic or otherwise). Insofar as a term like 'classical' implies a supra-personal system, a long-standing set of practices and norms, it applies as much to its industrial infrastructure as it does to the nature of its films, as much to its policies of distribution and exhibition as to its practices of production. It is in this wider sense that the term has been used to guide the scope and the contents of this book. Nevertheless, it is has been the nature of Hollywood's films and its practices of production that have attracted the most attention from scholars interested in issues of classicism. This is nowhere more apparent than in David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson's groundbreaking book *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*,¹ and it is thus with debates about Bordwell's discussion of Hollywood films and their aesthetic characteristics that this Reader begins.

The Classical Hollywood Cinema was first published in 1985. Using an extensive array of published and archival sources and a sample of a hundred different films, its authors sought not

just to study the managerial and organisational practices governing film production in Hollywood's studios, nor just to study the studios' deployment of technologies and craft skills (particularly those involved in scriptwriting, set design, cinematography, sound and editing), but to relate them all to the fundamental features of its films. Conceptualising these features as 'norms', Bordwell argues, first of all, that classical Hollywood films tell stories, that these stories are character-centred, and that the fundamental premises of classical Hollywood story construction are 'causality, consequence, psychological motivations, the drive toward overcoming obstacles and achieving goals. Character-centered – i.e. personal or psychological – causality is the armature of the classical story'.² Characters are prime causal agents. They are defined by goals and traits that are often marked by recurrent motifs and that the familiar personas of Hollywood's stars often helped support. In addition, most classical films possess 'at least two lines of action, both causally linking the same group of characters. Almost invariably, one of these lines involves heterosexual romantic love'.³

Various forms of motivation (compositional, realistic, generic, artistic) help to unify classical films, justify the things that happen in them, explain why their characters do what they do, and normalise the use of otherwise unusual, self-conscious or blatantly artificial artistic devices. In telling their stories, classical films can draw on any technique as long as it 'can transmit story information. Conversations, figure positions, facial expressions, and well-timed encounters between characters all function just as narrationally as do camera movements, cuts, or bursts of music'.⁴ In classical films, 'the narration is omniscient, but it lets that omniscience come forward more at some points than others'. In their opening passages, 'the narration is moderately self-conscious and overtly suppressive'. As they proceed, 'the narration becomes less self-conscious and more communicative', though towards the end 'omniscience and self-consciousness are likely to be re-asserted'.⁵ The order of events in classical films can be varied, especially by using character-centred flashbacks. The narration only 'shows important events and skips the intervals between them'. However, 'the classical film creates a patterned duration not only by what it leaves out but by a specific, powerful device. The story action sets a limit to how long it must last. Sometimes this means a strictly confined duration, as in the familiar convention of one-night-in-a-mysterious house films'.⁶ More commonly, though, it does so by setting deadlines.

In general, in 'making narrative causality the dominant system in the film's total form, the classical Hollywood cinema chooses to subordinate space. Most obviously, the classical style makes the sheerly graphic space of the film image a vehicle for narrative', though in doing so it uses 'image composition and editing to create a powerful representation of three-dimensional space'.⁷ Its compositions, whether moving or still, tend to be balanced and centred. The human face tends to be 'positioned in full, three-quarter, or profile view; the body typically in three-quarter view. ... Standing groups are arranged along horizontal or diagonal lines or half circles'.⁸ Space 'is created in planes through various depth cues. To the usual cues of visual overlap (the object that overlaps must be closer) and familiar size, the classical image adds pattern, color, texture, lighting and focus to specify depth'.⁹ 'Classical continuity editing ... reinforces spatial orientation. Continuity of graphic qualities can invite us to look through the "plate-glass window" of the screen. From shot to shot, tonality, movement, and the center of compositional interest shift enough to be distinguishable but not enough to be disturbing'.¹⁰ Similar principles govern the staging, framing and editing of character positions, interactions, movements and looks.

Finally, while 'the shot is the basic unit of material' in classical Hollywood, and while the terms 'shot' and 'scene' were often used interchangeably (at least until the 1950s), scenes and sequences were important additional building blocks as well.¹¹ Scenes were often linked by sequences, which compress or summarise narrative space, time and action, 'but the straightforward scene – one or more persons acting in a limited locale over a continuous

duration ... remains the building-block of classical dramaturgy'. Scenes usually consist of 'two distinct phases, the exposition and the development'. The former 'specifies the time, place and relevant characters' and 'must immediately reveal two things about the characters: their relative spatial positions and their states of mind'.¹² Then, when the developmental phase begins, characters 'act toward their goals, enter into conflict, make choices, set deadlines, make appointments, and plan future actions'. 'Most scenes continue or close off' an 'old line of action' before beginning another. 'Other scenes may reintroduce the old line, toy with it, suspend it again, introduce a new causal line, then close out the old and introduce yet another before the scene ends'. This 'new causal line ... motivates the shift to the next scene'.¹³

Bordwell acknowledges the extent to which norms such as these could be varied or transgressed. A number of Hollywood's genres (among them its musicals, its melodramas and its slapstick comedies) licensed deviations from some of these norms, and a number of its films experimented with causal norms and the provision of narrative knowledge. But these experiments and deviations were rarely as extreme, as marked or as systematic as they were in avant-garde or modernist art films. Overall, the principles that Hollywood claimed as its own 'rely on notions of decorum, formal harmony, respect for tradition, mimesis, self-effacing craftsmanship, and cool control of the perceiver's response – canons which critics in any medium usually call "classical."' ¹⁴

Since the initial publication of *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, a number of Bordwell's arguments have been subject to critique. Some of these critiques, notably those that question the dominance of linear causality and those that emphasise the importance of spectacle and emotional engagement, are discussed by Patrick Keating in 'Emotional Curves and Linear Narratives' (Chapter 1), which serves as a prologue to this reader. Keating argues that 'metaphors of "dominance" are not always helpful in understanding the relationship between narrative and other systems. Instead, narrative and other attractions can work together to produce an intensified emotional response'. In doing so, he offers a productive alternative to some of Bordwell's arguments. He also discusses the work of theorists and historians such as Rick Altman, Noël Carroll, Elizabeth Cowie, Donald Crafton, Dirk Eitzen, Richard Maltby and Linda Williams, many of whom have offered explicit or implicit criticisms of at least some of Bordwell's arguments. These criticisms have been augmented by Robert Knopf's discussion of a number of Buster Keaton's feature films and, implicitly at least, by Martin Rubin's discussion of the Busby Berkeley musical, *The Gang's All Here* (1943).¹⁵ However, few scholars have engaged in any detail with Bordwell's work on narration, duration, the construction of sequences and scenes, shot composition and editing, or the handling of narrative space and time. To that extent, his contributions to *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, along with those of Kristin Thompson, who traces the history of continuity editing, staging, acting and other key devices and conventions, still remain essential reading.¹⁶

Notes

- 1 David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985).
- 2 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 13.
- 3 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 16.
- 4 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 24.
- 5 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 25.
- 6 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 44.
- 7 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 50.
- 8 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 51.
- 9 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 52.

- 10 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 55.
- 11 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 60.
- 12 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 63.
- 13 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 64.
- 14 Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, 3–4.
- 15 Robert Knopf, *The Theater and Cinema of Buster Keaton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 76–111; Martin Rubin, *Showstoppers: Busby Berkeley and the Tradition of Spectacle* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 159–70. Plotless musical revues such as *King of Jazz* (1928) and *Ziegfeld Follies* (1946), animated 'package features' such as *Fantasia* (1940) and other instances of what David Scott Diffrient has called 'episodic cinema' might be cited as exceptions to Bordwell's model of the classical Hollywood feature film as well. See David Scott Diffrient, 'Cabinets of Cinematic Curiosities: A Critical History of the Animated "Package Feature"', From *Fantasia* (1940) to *Memories* (1995)', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, vol. 26 no. 4 (2006), 505–35.
- 16 For Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson's own reflections on *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* and its critics, see '*The Classical Hollywood Cinema Twenty-Five Years Along*', <http://davidbordwell.net/essays/classical.php> (September 2010).

Patrick Keating

PROLOGUE: EMOTIONAL CURVES AND LINEAR NARRATIVES

IN FRED NIBLO'S 1921 VERSION OF *The Three Musketeers* D'Artagnan, played by Douglas Fairbanks, first joins forces with the title characters during an extended fight scene. The scene is packed with gags and stunts as Fairbanks leaps around the set with knife and sword in hand. At one point he even throws his sword like a harpoon. While such moments of spectacle are common in Hollywood films, ranging from the gags of comedian comedy to the musical numbers of Busby Berkeley, historians have long argued about the best way to theorize Hollywood's strategies for combining narrative and other attractions.

We can usefully group the various theoretical models into three categories: a Classical model, which argues that a certain type of narrative operates as a dominant in relation to various subordinate systems; an Alternation model, which argues that the dominance of narrative alternates with the dominance of other systems; and an Affective model, which argues that linear narrative is itself subordinate to a more important goal, the production of emotion. After surveying these alternatives, I will propose my own version of the Affective model—a version that will, I hope, draw important insights from the other two models. My argument is that metaphors of “dominance” are not always helpful in understanding the relationship between narrative and other systems. Instead, narrative and other attractions can work together to produce an intensified emotional response. We can call this the Cooperation model, since the model explains how narrative and attractions can support each other.¹ Part 1 offers a brief summary of three existing models. Part 2 explains my proposal for a Cooperation model. Part 3 applies the model to a set of films that have long played a central role in debates about the status of narrative in Hollywood: the musicals of Busby Berkeley.

1 Three models

The most complete presentation of the Classical model appears in *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* by David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson. The book places particular emphasis on the importance of linear narrative. Bordwell writes, “Here in brief is the premise of Hollywood story construction: causality, consequence, psychological motivations, the drive toward overcoming obstacles and achieving goals. Character-centered—i.e., personal

sample content of The Classical Hollywood Reader

- [download The Man Cave Cookbook](#)
- [click A Little Lumpen Novelita](#)
- [download Fury: Women Write About Sex, Power and Violence pdf, azw \(kindle\), epub](#)
- [click Underground: My Life with SDS and the Weathermen](#)

- <http://rodrigocaporal.com/library/Emotional-Structure--Creating-the-Story-Beneath-the-Plot--A-Guide-for-Screenwriters.pdf>
- <http://thermco.pl/library/Telling-the-Truth-about-History.pdf>
- <http://korplast.gr/lib/The-Two-of-Swords--Part-6.pdf>
- <http://flog.co.id/library/Remote-Control--New-Media--New-Ethics.pdf>