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mutually complementary since together they best substantiate the inextricable connection between word and act in the Stalinist historical context.

All the eleven essays written especially for this collection treat the phenomena of Soviet culture as belonging to the concrete space and time of Stalinism. The authors, sometimes explicitly so, adopted M. Bakhtin's concept of *chronotope* and proposed interpretations proceeding from their view of the historical context. It is only M. Epstein's concluding essay, comprising material written in the 1980's, that breaks this principle and studies a number of *topoi* related both to the appropriation, and consideration, of Russian space in a rather ahistorical way, as deeply embedded within a perennial Russian cultural tradition. The inclusion of Epstein's essay has been possibly meant to remind the reader that the authors deliberately leave the field of discussion open to further contributions. Such contributions might easily switch the attention to the practical concerns behind many of the issues discussed in the book: advertizing fulfils particular economic functions even without a free market; the huge expenditures on the construction of the Moscow Metro might have been considered strategic investments; Soviet musicals were possibly meant not only to carry messages, but to attract viewers; Arctic exploration was expected to offer new communications' routes between European Russia and the Far East; the *usvoenie* of Central Asia had its immediate economic stakes. Stalin's dictatorship in the 1930's and its ugliest consequences: the Great Terror of the 1930's, the devastating famine in Ukraine, and the paranoid censorship on all levels of public communications, inevitably make the student of the period wary of traps of all sorts. Treating the cultural history of the period under the stigma of ideology is certainly the more secure way – no matter whether the focus is placed on the production of culture by party and state or on their acceptance, rejection or manipulation by the citizen. But a more practical approach to cultural and social history might yield good fruit as well and this is a direction which future studies of Stalinism may pursue.

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Lee Grieveson. *Policing Cinema: Movies and Censorship in Early Twentieth-Century America*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2004. Pp. xiii, 348. \$24.95

The topic of silent film has hardly gone overlooked by film historians; indeed, literature on the topic has mushroomed over the course of the past

twenty years. General consensus follows scholar Tom Gunning in locating a shift from a “cinema of attractions” based on spectacle to the “classical Hollywood” model of narrative with closure in the years around 1909, but causal analysis varies: was this shift predicated upon an “embourgeoisement” of cinema intended to tap into the respectable middle-class market? upon recognition of gendered film attendance that sought to attract the female audience? upon shifting conceptions of the public sphere that mediated the relationship between film and spectator? Each of these factors has had its case argued, and persuasively so.

In *Policing Cinema* Lee Grieveson accounts for all of these factors, offering a sweeping and substantive overview of scholarship on film and culture in early twentieth-century America while also presenting a new argument regarding the emergence of the classical Hollywood model. Grieveson declares censorship a prime mover in the process, showing how industry anxieties about regulatory policy inspired a purging of political, sexual, and otherwise oppositional content, as film producers sought to reconfigure cinema as “harmless entertainment” in order to access the expanding consumer culture with minimal external restrictions. The very structure of classical Hollywood film reflected an internalized censorial gaze that resulted in several decades of apolitical dream-factory pabulum. All too often this is seen as a result of the 1915 Supreme Court decision that placed film outside the protective realm of the First Amendment, classifying it as mere commerce instead of allowing it the freedom of speech bestowed on the press and all other forms of media. For Grieveson the 1915 case is instead the end point, the conclusion that codified an extensive set of efforts to regulate cinema in the years after 1907. In his analysis, these efforts resulted from worries about immigration, modern sexuality and gender roles, and racism. *Policing Cinema* delivers a multifaceted narrative, as Grieveson juggles several overlapping themes with commendable clarity. It provides a valuable new angle of approach to both censorship studies and film history, uncovering some significant and overlooked facets of early censorship that persuasively reveal an ostensibly neutral evolution by which racism was embedded, or at least implicated, in the very organization of classical Hollywood narrative.

Grieveson begins with a synthetic overview before moving into detailed case studies. When the *Chicago Tribune* began a crusade against nickelodeons in 1907, its articles focused on audiences as much as film content. To Grieveson, as to earlier scholars, this reflected a pervasive fear of unassimilated immigrants that marked much of Progressive ideology in the first two decades of the century, before restrictive immigration laws tempered the threat of an America overrun by foreigners. The author does a reasonable job of covering the vast literature on these worries, tying them to nativism

and the ongoing “search for order,” and showing how women were able to take a leading role in regulatory efforts by asserting the moral authority of maternalism. If Grieveson’s discussion of these topics sometimes seems a bit perfunctory, this is probably due to their familiarity and his understandable eagerness to move the discussion into his own original research and analysis; readers interested in further details on the matters will find a rich and thorough bibliography in his footnotes. One might fault Grieveson for neglecting a substantive engagement with Nicola Beisel’s *Imperiled Innocents*, which argued for a connection between vice-crusader Anthony Comstock and the fears of Victorian Protestants about family and cultural reproduction in the face of growing immigrant populations; though the book shows up in the bibliography, its analysis of nativism and obscenity anticipates and parallels Grieveson’s ideas on censorship enough to merit comparative discussion.

Nonetheless, Grieveson offers fresh insights into early film censorship in his overview. The *Tribune* efforts led to the establishment of a police censor board in Chicago later in 1907, which set a precedent that spread rapidly. Soon cities such as Detroit, St. Louis, San Francisco, Atlanta, Nashville, and Seattle had censor boards, and several state bodies followed. To Grieveson this signified an important shift in the regulation of cinema; before 1907 regulations had been primarily spatial, in the form of zoning laws or fire code regulations (as well as blue laws mandating Sunday closures), but after 1907 the focus fell firmly on film content. This shift would carry vast significance to the formal development of cinema. As he later shows, initial support for this project came from exhibitors, who wanted to shift the onus of regulation from their physical establishments to the content supplied by producers, but film producers would soon seek to co-opt content-based censorship through a strategic alliance with progressive reformers. This tenuous coalition would disintegrate in a matter of years, but would first shape both early censorship efforts and cinematic narrative conventions.

Grieveson hones in on *The Unwritten Law: A Thrilling Drama Based on the Thaw-White Case*, released by Lubin in 1907, as a pivotal moment in the shift to content-based regulation, the “first film in the United States to be widely constructed as ‘scandalous’” (38). Detailing Harry Thaw’s shooting and killing of architect Stanford White for drugging and raping Thaw’s then-teenaged wife three years earlier, the film (as well as the case itself, highly sensationalized in the press) served as the twentieth-century equivalent of the murders of Helen Jewett or Mary Rogers in the prior century, focusing attention on the debauched underside of urban life and heightening “anxieties about both the vulnerability and agency of women and children in the public sphere of commercialized leisure” (40). Grieveson tells the tale of the Thaw-White case in some detail, which serves as a tangent, but an engaging one,

before connecting it to the development of film censorship. The debate over *The Unwritten Law* and its perverse content alerted production companies to the potential value of censorship: by focusing on individual and isolated texts, censorship could “defuse the broader reform impetus” by diverting attention from the institutional critique that associated cinema with immigrants, the lower classes, and crime (71). This critique could be witnessed in the 1908 Illinois Supreme Court decision upholding the Chicago censor board, in which a judge ruled on grounds less specific to the films in question than on the basis of the perceived dubious quality of the audience.

Fortunately for film producers, progressive reformers held compatible goals. In Chicago, Jane Addams saw film as analogous to city parks and playgrounds, in terms of its potentially uplifting characteristics. Hull House even opened an “uplift theater” to show educational films and stories with moral endings, as a means of teaching immigrants about American lifestyles. It failed, closing in three months; as one disaffected boy explained in a memorable quote, “people like to see fights ‘n’ fellows getting hurt, ‘n’ love makin’, ‘n’ robbers, and all that stuff” (70). But the reformers supplied the industry with the idea of uplift, and the industry ran with it. After the mayor of New York City revoked theater licenses in 1908, closing 550 nickelodeons on Christmas Eve, producers joined with reformers in the NYC-based People’s Institute to sponsor the New York Board of Censors. Three arguments defined the industry’s position: cinema could provide a form of uplift for the lower classes, assisting in Americanization and teaching life lessons; self-regulation was more effective than government regulation; and the theater could serve as a substitute for the saloon, keeping families intact and sober. As Grieveson notes, this theory applied the same logic vaudeville had used in the 19th century to achieve cultural legitimization, and it initially proved persuasive for cinema as well.

The New York Board of Censors evolved into the National Board of Censorship the next year, in an effort to bypass state and local bodies (whose provincial and idiosyncratic demands were quite costly to film distributors) by insuring a uniform set of standards. Meanwhile, the trade press emphasized uplift and education; Grieveson argues that the nascent convention of narrative closure developed in part from this effort, as reform films such as *Father and Drunkard* (1908) centered on the reconstitution of shattered families as wastrels found redemption. While reformers took comfort in this direction, they were less satisfied with the industry’s growing aversion to politics and social importance. In a careful, sustained look at the censorship struggles of two “white slave” films from 1913, Grieveson shows how the progressive-industry alliance foundered on the rocky shores of narrative convention. *Traffic in Souls* adapted a Rockefeller Foundation-funded report on prostitution into

cinematic form, while *Inside of the White Slave Trade* acted as an expose of prostitution. Grieveson positions the former film at the midway point between the cinema of attractions and classical Hollywood: its proto-verite scenes shot at Ellis Island belonged to the earlier tradition, but its narrative emphasis fell within the emerging format. While the Rockefeller report noted corruption in the police, *Traffic in Souls* reframed the police as heroic. It also removed the report's emphasis on structural social factors that caused prostitution, instead moralistically depicting the women seduced into it as frivolous and personally complicit. Reformers called for more documentary-style scenes and particularly abhorred the film's happy ending (of a woman rescued from prostitution by a police officer), but censors passed the film.

Inside the White Slave Trade, meanwhile, took an opposite approach, emphasizing the sexism and lack of economic opportunities that impelled women into prostitution. The film's relatively agitprop approach satisfied reformers, but not censors, who refused to pass the film in early 1914, calling it "not sufficiently dramatic." This abandonment of uplift in the interest of a more politically palatable product severed the bond between producers and reformers. The latter group would weaken the National Board of Censorship by calling attention to its industry ties, while the trade press would shift emphasis from uplift to "harmless entertainment," noting in a screenplay-writing manual that muckraking was "out of place in the picture" (34).

Grieveson's tracing of these alliances and fallings-out is astute and attentive to detail, expanding the scope of scholarly work on censorship. But he saves his most stunning analysis for the chapter "Fight Films," which details the direct means by which racist legislation directed at suppressing films of black boxer Jack Johnson defeating white men constructed the legal perception of film as commerce—precisely the perception written into constitutional law by the Supreme Court in 1915, and responsible for insuring the dominance of the classical Hollywood narrative for four decades.

Johnson's defeat of white Jim Jeffries in 1910 played into prevalent white fears of "race suicide;" already distraught about the shaky definition of whiteness challenged by ethnic immigrants, the ruling racial class now also felt its masculinity threatened by athletically-superior black men. Race riots ensued after the fight, as well as after screenings of filmed portrayals of it, leading to the 1912 Sims Act (sponsored by southern congressmen), prohibiting interstate transportation of fight films and transparently aimed at depictions of Johnson. Grieveson does a dazzling job of interweaving the legislative history of the Sims Act with that of the 1910 Mann Act, designed to prohibit the interstate transportation of females for immoral purposes; both were "fundamentally racist," as Grieveson rightfully minces no words in writing, and both involved the boxer Johnson (who was convicted of Mann

Act violations in 1913, in a flagrantly biased trial) (124). Though Grieveson details some fascinating consequences of the Sims Act (one enterprising distributor attempted to project a Johnson fight film across the Canadian border to be rephotographed in the U.S., though his plan to cross state borders in this manner and thus evade the law were thwarted in court!), he rightly emphasizes its most important legacy to film censorship, in the articulation of the commerce theory of cinema.

In his conclusion, Grieveson goes on to show how the *Mutual Film Corporation v. Ohio* case first centered on property rights, but switched gears to a freedom of speech emphasis as it percolated up through the court system to the Supreme Court. The 1915 decision, then, merely finalized a conceptualization of cinema that had already been internalized by the film industry in its efforts to avoid censorship, though it guaranteed the long-term institutionalization of that framework. The film industry would ultimately win First Amendment protection in 1952, but even after that it would continue churning out de-politicized drivel for the most part. *Policing Cinema* expands our understanding of how that drivel came to dominate American cinema, and how nativist and racist agendas informed the classical Hollywood regime. Lee Grieveson has done film studies a service with the book, and it deserves a wide readership.

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Alfred W McCoy. *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation, from the Cold War to the War on Terror*. (American Empire Project) New York: Henry Holt and Company. 2006. Pp. 290. \$15.00.

As the Iraq War unfolded in American television, I remember conservative pundits wondering about America's suitability for dealing with terrorists given the fact that a democratic nation such as the United States was by definition incapacitated to carry on, let alone possess the know-how, to conduct the dirty business of interrogation and torture thought necessary to obtain information on networks of terror. In his book on torture, Alfred W. McCoy traces the roots of modern techniques of interrogation, so problematically revealed in the revelations surrounding the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, to Cold War fears of communism and CIA responses to perceived Soviet innovations and discoveries in torture and interrogation. What resulted years later was a new paradigm in the history of torture: the possibility of destroying an individual's