

attacks that have been made on it. Secondly, an analysis of the workings of myth and the possibilities of subverting it in the Hollywood system could prove of use in determining a strategy for the subversion of ideology in general.

Perhaps something should be said about the European art film; undoubtedly, it is more open to the invasion of myth than the Hollywood film. This point becomes quite clear when we scrutinise the work of Riefenstahl, Compañeez, Trintignant, Varda and others. The films of Agnes Varda are a particularly good example of an *oeuvre* which celebrates bourgeois myths of women, and with it the apparent innocence of the sign. *Le Bonheur* in particular, almost invites a Barthesian analysis! Varda's portrayal of female fantasy constitutes one of the nearest approximations to the facile day-dreams perpetuated by advertising that probably exists in the cinema. Her films appear totally innocent to the workings of myth; indeed, it is the purpose of myth to fabricate an impression of innocence, in which all becomes 'natural': Varda's concern for nature is a direct expression of this retreat from history: history is transmuted into nature, involving the elimination of all questions, because all appears 'natural'. There is no doubt that Varda's work is reactionary: in her rejection of culture and her placement of women outside history her films mark a retrograde step in woman's cinema.

Conclusion

What kind of strategy, then, is appropriate at this particular point in time? The development of collec-

tive work is obviously a major step forward; as a means of acquiring and sharing skills it constitutes a formidable challenge to male privilege in the film industry: as an expression of sisterhood, it suggests a viable alternative to the rigid hierarchical structures of male-dominated cinema and offers real opportunities for a dialogue about the nature of women's cinema within it. At this point in time, a strategy should be developed which embraces both the notion of films as a political tool and film as entertainment. For too long these have been regarded as two opposing poles with little common ground. In order to counter our objectification in the cinema, our collective fantasies must be released: women's cinema must embody the working through of desire: such an objective demands the use of the entertainment film. Ideas derived from the entertainment film, then, should inform the political film, and political ideas should inform the entertainment cinema: a two-way process. Finally, a repressive moralistic assertion that women's cinema is collective film-making is misleading and unnecessary: we should seek to operate at all levels: within the male-dominated cinema and outside it. This essay has attempted to demonstrate the interest of women's films made within the system. Voluntarism and utopianism must be avoided if any revolutionary strategy is to emerge. A collective film *of itself* cannot reflect the conditions of its production. What collective methods do provide is the real possibility of examining how cinema works and how we can best interrogate and demystify the workings of ideology: it will be from these insights that a genuinely revolutionary conception of counter-cinema for the women's struggle will come.

Refocusing Authorship in Women's Filmmaking

Angela Martin

Angela Martin's essay "Refocusing Authorship in Women's Filmmaking" appeared originally in an anthology of feminist film criticism published in 2003 entitled *Women Filmmakers: Refocusing*. Martin's contribution to the collection examines the masculine biases of classic auteurism, arguing that the position of women directors in the industry is necessarily different from that of men. Auteurism's traditional masculine paradigms restrict women filmmakers to being considered as auteurs in particular ways. Attempting to move beyond the trap of gender binarism, Martin calls for feminist authorship to be defined by a distinctive style that does not necessarily rely on the locatable presence of a female voice.

This chapter has two points of departure. The first is my teaching of film theory and practice; the second is the availability of women's films – specifically within the education context but also within the wider context of distribution and exhibition. It seems to me that we are experiencing two new kinds of omission of women filmmakers:

1. In addition to the many lost films by women from the earliest period of the cinema, we have also lost a disturbing number from the 1970s. For example, when I was putting a festival program strand together on pioneer women documentary filmmakers,¹ I could not get hold of the prints of films by the London Women's Film Group² or of Heiny Srour's *The Hour of Liberation* (Lebanon 1974). The filmmakers themselves were not entirely aware that their films were no longer in distribution.³

Many more recent films are often available only during brief cinema runs, and only a few of these find their way onto video; even fewer will be widely available on video.

2. This loss of important films by women reflects and is reflected in the discipline of film studies, which tends to ignore or omit women's films – not consciously, but because the theory that informs the discipline is still largely only concerned with male filmmakers. This applies to film history, genre studies, authorship, narrative, film language, and so on. Furthermore, while feminist film theory has, rightly, had a great impact on film theory in general, its attention, too, has tended to focus on the work of male filmmakers. As a teacher and as a film worker, I find this extremely worrying and would suggest that we need to look at film theory in general from this point of view.

But I wish here to address the issue only in two related ways: by looking at the notion of authorship and by suggesting a different angle on women's filmmaking.

Authorship is the main aspect of film theory that directly affects women filmmakers; however, for historical reasons, it actually contributes to the omission of women's films from circulation and from film theory. I want to argue, therefore, that unless we talk about women's films in a different way, we will not be able to address that omission. And although I am not going to talk here about Kathryn Bigelow, her work as a woman filmmaker makes the need for this argument very clear; so I will start and end with references to her.

I originally intended to produce a paper on Bigelow's work and the possibility of talking about a gendered authorship, with particular reference to her film *Point Break*, but I found the proposal of "authorship" increasingly problematic. At the same time, excellent publications have appeared in English on the work of Agnès Varda, Diane Kurys, Marguerite Duras, and Dorothy Arzner;⁴ and Christina Lane has published an important article on Bigelow.⁵ All these texts point to the uneasy relationship between theoretical notions of authorship and women's filmmaking:

I will not claim that Arzner's films are unqualified successes from beginning to end; I am far too suspicious of such a "great genius" theory of authorship.⁶

Within the specific context of French cinema and French culture . . . the concept of the *auteur*, if ostensibly ungendered, remains resolutely masculine.⁷

It is . . . hard to deny to Varda's work that rather over-used title of *cinéma d'auteur*.⁸

However, as Carrie Tarr points out: "feminist critics and historians have argued the political necessity for defending female authorship as a useful and necessary category."⁹ Otherwise the theory of authorship continues its tendency towards a "league table" of "great genius" (read male), and: "female-authored films may be more open to representations of women reworked to feminist or woman-identified ends."¹⁰

At the same time, several women filmmakers (Kurys and Coline Serreau amongst them)¹¹ do not identify

themselves or their work with a feminist (or even specifically female) project; on the other hand, the theory of authorship has become something of a tangled web, and I want now to look briefly at a few of the signposts along the way of film theory and of film studies as I pursue my argument that "auteurism," as we call it in English has nothing to do with women's filmmaking.¹²

The original suggestion that the filmmaker should be an auteur was a matter of policy, not of theory: it was about the desire for a cinema of self-expression, a generational revolt on the part of the young *Cahiers du cinéma* critics, who were demanding a break with the persistently traditional mainstream French cinema, which they saw as heavy, entrenched, and tied to the wordiness of the theatre-inspired script. They spoke about auteurs because they desperately wanted to claw the creative centre away from the writers of these scripts. Everything, they said, should be geared towards, shaped, and even produced by the "true brilliance"¹³ of the director, the film auteur's "self-expression"¹⁴ of "primary emotion."¹⁵ In his attempt "to make a personal work,"¹⁶ the auteur transforms, "as if by magic, a screenplay written by someone else."¹⁷ And they saw the epitome of the *politique* in the work of a number of hitherto little thought of commercial Hollywood directors. One example illustrates the gender-bound nature of their enthusiasm. In his announcement of the arrival of "the age of the auteurs," Jacques Rivette names four filmmakers: Nicholas Ray, Richard Brooks, Anthony Mann, and Robert Aldrich, who, if one accepted nothing else about them, he wrote, share the common trait of youth. But of the virtues of youth that they share, violence is the primary one:

not that easy brutality which constituted the success of a Dmytryk or a Benedek, but a virile anger, which comes from the heart, and lies less in the scenario or the choice of events, than in the tone of the narrative and the very technique of the *mise en scène*. Violence is never an end, but a means of approach . . . to drill an opening: in short, to open the shortest routes. And the frequent resort to a technique which is discontinuous, halting, which refuses the conventions of cutting and continuity, is a form of that "superior madness" which Cocteau speaks about, born out of the need for an immediate expression which accounts for and shares in the primary emotions of the *auteur* . . . trying to make a personal work . . . In short, violence is the external sign of rupture.¹⁸

Actually, this male-centredness notwithstanding, the demands of the *Cahiers* critics were understandable within their own historical and political context – being part of the first new post-Second World War generation, implicated in the French colonial war against the Algerian struggle for independence, and disillusioned by the state, the Church, and bourgeois culture. But virility is, by definition, masculine,¹⁹ which is easily attached to notions of violence, anger, and "the need for an immediate expression"; and the *Nouvelle Vague*'s call for a personal self-expression is very different from the later feminist call for the personal to be political rather than ego-centric.

The inevitable male-centredness of the *politique des auteurs* was compounded by Andrew Sarris's theory that the source of value was *the director*. At the same time, the British film journal *Movie* published "The talent histogram" in its first issue in June 1962,²⁰ categorizing directors according to "Great, Brilliant, Very Talented, Talented, Competent or Ambitious, and The Rest." Two women appear in it, in the last two categories – Shirley Clarke was in the longest (American) "Competent or Ambitious" column, while Muriel Box was one of "The [almost as many British] Rest."²¹ Victor Perkins summarized the theory and critical practice of auteurism as looking for "the achievement within the single film of values like economy, unity, eloquence, subtlety, depth and *vigour* [on the one hand; and on the other] recurrent themes in a director's films considered as a series . . . themes, viewpoints and methods of sufficient personal significance to carry over from film to film" (emphasis mine).²²

We have now moved on a long way from this position, but it is apparently still alive and well. Just a cursory keyword computer reference check produced a dozen or so journal articles between 1981 and 1993 that defend the greatness of, for example, Fassbinder, Kazan, John Ford (revisited), Jacques Doillon, Louis Malle, Sirk, and the Marx Brothers but not a single woman filmmaker. However, if we attempted to apply the theory to women filmmakers, as Claire Johnston understandably suggested in 1973,²³ we could then have applied it only to the work of Arzner or Lupino because only those filmmakers had produced a body of work within a single production context. Bigelow would be one of the few current women filmmakers who would be eligible, if one wanted to make the claim.

Later, as auteur analysis, the theory looked to *the text* as the source of a meaning of which the filmmaker himself may not have been aware. This involves

tracing a structure (not a message) within the work, which can *then post factum* be assigned to an individual, the director . . . [However,] there can be no doubt that the presence of a structure in the text can often be connected with the presence of a director on the set, but the situation in the cinema, where the director's primary task is often one of co-ordination and rationalisation, is very different from that in the other arts, where there is a much more direct relationship between artist and work. It is in this sense that it is possible to speak of a film *auteur* as an *unconscious catalyst*.²⁴ (my emphasis)

The problem here, as far as women filmmakers are concerned, is that they are not unconscious industry hacks or jobbing directors, churning out one film after another within recognizable commercial cinema genres. Most women filmmakers we would be interested in are thinking filmmakers, usually working within an independent cinema framework, and many have been to film school, even if, like Chantal Akerman, they didn't stay very long. Kathryn Bigelow, for example, attended classes with Milos Forman and Peter Wollen, among others. She was, therefore, engaged in dialogue about film theory almost as soon as she picked up a camera. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that when she approaches the making of a film, she does so with knowledge of the issues of representation, ideology, film history, and aesthetics. In other words, she – like Wollen himself – is a very conscious filmmaker.

Between the publication of *Movie*'s "Talent Histogram" and Wollen's distancing the filmmaker's person from his function, Roland Barthes published "The Death of the Author" (1968), which made it clear that meaning was produced by *the reader*: "As soon as a fact is *narrated* . . . the voice loses its origins, the author enters into his own death . . . a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader . . . is simply that *someone* who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted . . . [and] the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author."²⁵

One cannot claim a filmmaker as auteur if, effectively, the author is dead. Of course, the debate about authorship – in its proper, unabridged context – has developed into extremely important work on language, signification, and enunciation. But the work of women filmmakers remains of marginal interest to it;²⁶ and it seems to me that the title of Audre Lorde's text, *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House*, has a useful resonance here, as does a recent comment I understood Germaine Greer to be making²⁷ – that the way poetry is lauded is actually as male display and, therefore, there is no point in arguing that any woman poet could be better than Shakespeare because, clearly, she is unlikely to be engaging in that kind of poetry. By the same token, the kind of poetry women do write is not accounted for in the "league tables" of poet-names.

Both film theory and film studies have, thank goodness, acknowledged the work of feminist film theorists; however, largely for the reasons already outlined, they only pay lip service to the presence and contribution of women filmmakers – with the possible exception of those filmmakers who are, as Dudley Andrew puts it, "serious and progressive critics themselves," like Duras, Mulvey with Wollen, and Huillet with Straub.²⁸ Looking at what film studies uses as course literature, this is abundantly clear. I'll give just a couple of recent examples. In his overview of authorship in the important *Oxford Guide to Film Studies*,²⁹ Stephen Crofts outlines ten modes. The "author as gendered" mode is the *shortest* section, despite the fact that it begins: "The most influential theoretical discourse affecting film theory in the last two decades, feminism has necessarily impinged [sic] on Authorship."³⁰

Arzner alone is mentioned here, and only briefly. Otherwise, the *Oxford Guide* effectively mentions female directors only in its chapters dealing with "otherness" – feminism and film; gay, lesbian, and queer cinema; the avant-garde; and non-American cinemas. Chantal Akerman is the only woman director to be given one of the "special mention" boxes. In *The Oxford History of World Cinema* there appears to be no mention whatever of Lois Weber (nor is there any mention of her in Thompson and Bordwell's *Film History*) and only passing mention of Alice Guy Blaché (within the contexts of Gaumont, her husband, and

Louis Feuillade, whom she taught). Yet these important texts form part of the material that informs much of the practice of film studies.

Unfortunately, though for very good reasons, feminist film theory has also paid most attention to male-directed mainstream cinema, often with a view to at least understanding, if not "dismantling[,] the master's house," and to those avant-garde women filmmakers mentioned by Dudley Andrew, who can be said to be working within the same theoretical framework; that is, on questions of "the gaze," representations of the body, desire, subjectivity, and so on. For the most part, this work takes place within (or near) the academy. Meanwhile, women have been working in more and more sections of the industry, no longer just in theory-based (or campaign) filmmaking. The associations representing women in production are now more industry-based and, rightly and inevitably, are about women being recognized by, and getting on in, the industry. As a result, while we used to talk in terms of whether there was a feminist aesthetic or a woman's voice that informed women's filmmaking, such questions are now less productive, and, though necessary and very important at the time, they have, in some ways, become as limiting as the auteur theory. It is not surprising that several women filmmakers who became known as feature directors were reluctant to be tied by such a tight framework. Consequently, from the mid-1980s or so there was a divergence of interests. Kathryn Bigelow, for example, has, on the whole, been on the industry side of the divide, and she has not attracted the volume of theory-informed articles that Sally Potter or Jane Campion have (though, admittedly, this is changing).³¹ Within authorship theory, what feminist film criticism/theory has done is talk about *female* or *feminist* authorship. Interestingly, however, Kathryn Bigelow's work seems to me to raise considerable problems for this approach, largely *because* of her mainstream position. But I believe the problem is wider than this and that it emanates from the question of definition.

Strictly speaking, there are two definitions of the word "authorship": one concerns the (legal) ownership of an idea or its mode of expression, the other concerns the act and the occupation of writing. But female or feminist authorship tends to be sought in what can be identifiably linked to the filmmaker (as woman):

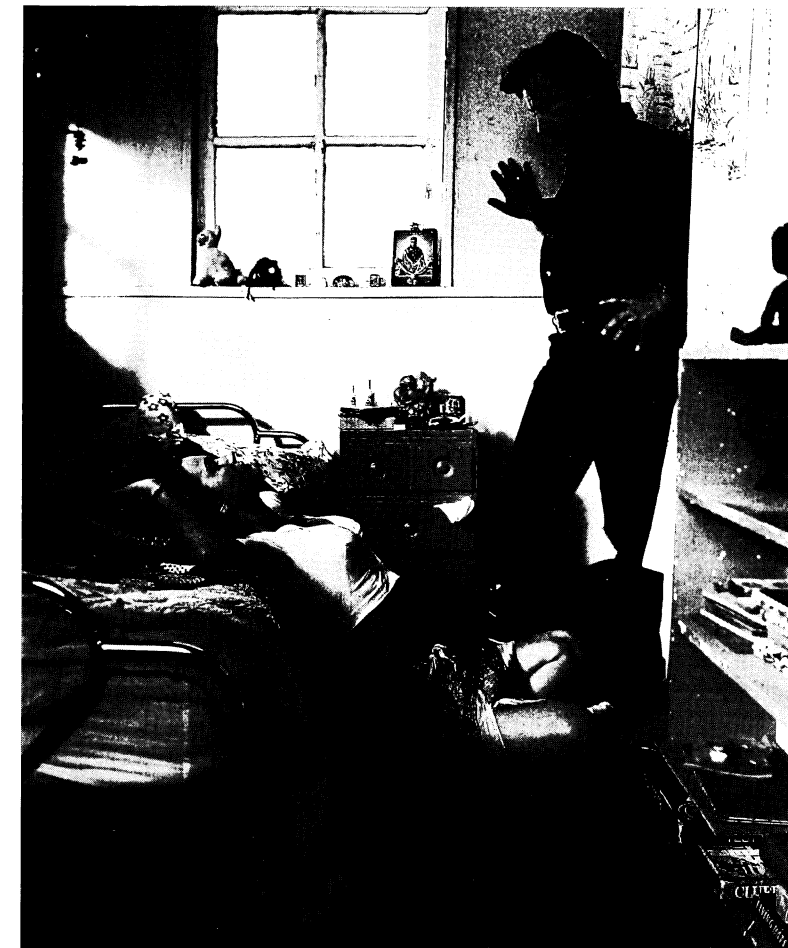


Figure 14.1 Kate Winslett and Harvey Keitel embody the dynamics of gender politics in Jane Campion's *Holy Smoke* (Miramax, 1999). Produced by Jan Chapman

- a film's autobiographical reference
- a filmmaker's actual presence in the film
- the evidence of a female voice within the narrative (however located).³²

But none of these, as factors in a film, guarantees authorship. And if a woman filmmaker's film does not produce evidence of a female voice, this does not preclude her from being the film's author (in either of the strict senses). Bigelow's films, for example, do not show easy evidence of her presence or even of a clear female or feminist voice. How to talk about her films, then, from a feminist authorship point of view?

Bigelow's films are produced within Hollywood's mainstream film *industry* context, with a crew. This, of course, is one of the arguments against the theory of "author-name" authorship, and her work confounds this argument. Obviously she works with other people on her films, but she appears to have managed to work with and for empathetic people (and I don't mean in a cosy sense). Although *Point Break* was not, to begin with, a personally initiated project, she was the director the producers kept returning to when they were setting up the film's production. She herself asked for James Cameron to be brought onto the project. Editor Howard Smith had already worked with her on *Near*



Figure 14.2 Repressed homoeroticism in the action film: Kathryn Bigelow's *Point Break* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1991). Produced by James Cameron

Dark. Bigelow says she rewrote the script, originally written by Peter Illiff (who scripted *Patriot Games*). Also, having been a painter before becoming a filmmaker, she knows, sooner than she knows anything else about the shoot, how she wants a film to look. Don Peterman, the DOP on *Point Break*, is quite categorical when he says that the look his team produced was the look Bigelow wanted. She also works with storyboards, which she has said was particularly important because several second units were involved in the shooting of *Point Break* and it was essential for their different images to cohere with the rest of the material. It would seem ridiculous, therefore, to suggest that she did not have considerable aesthetic and conceptual control of the film. I would certainly argue for a reading of the film that is informed by feminism, but this does not seem to fit the definition of female or feminist authorship summarized above.

Much more helpful, it seems to me, is the sense of a film being produced in a context of dialogue within which the filmmaker, the context, and the reader/spectator all participate and from which they all produce meanings that will at least overlap if not actu-

ally agree. We need to find a way of recognizing this kind of conceptual and aesthetic work around the production of a film. We particularly need to do this for women filmmakers, and we need to do it for exactly the same reasons as we need to claim women filmmakers as auteurs or to define and defend notions of female authorship. One useful way forward would be to take the concept Agnès Varda uses for her work: *cinécriture*³³ (which translates, rather less happily, as "filmic writing"):

A well-written film is also well-filmed, the actors are well chosen, so are the locations. The cutting, the movement, the points-of-view, the rhythm of filming and editing have been felt and considered in the way a writer chooses the depth and meaning of sentences, the type of words, number of adverbs, paragraphs, asides, chapters which advance the story or break its flow, etc. In writing it's called style. In the cinema, style is *cinécriture*.³⁴

I see this as a starting point rather than as an ending point because questions of style are also problematic. However, as a starting point, it would allow us to avoid having to go through and be marginalized by the

arguments about the authorship theory, or having to find the filmmaker or her female voice in the text in order to give it authorial credence. It also allows us to move away from the legal definition of "authorship" and towards the definition dealing with the practice of writing, which may or may not emerge from a single person but, in terms of film production,

will certainly be organized around the director. It also allows us to talk about women auteur filmmakers³⁵ and to make a different historical link – a link made through filmmakers like Lois Weber, Germaine Dulac, Arzner, and many others who would never be seen as auteurs but who, like a number of male directors, are filmmakers who produced eloquent filmic writing.

Notes

- 1 Sheffield International Documentary Festival (England) 1995.
- 2 The LWFG was active between 1972 and 1977, and amongst the films produced by members of the group (which included Claire Johnston) were the very moving *Women of the Rhonda* (1972); a feature-length "political burlesque," *The Amazing Equal Pay Show* (1974); and the campaign documentary with fictional elements, *Whose Choice?* (1976).
- 3 As the rights on shorts and documentaries came to the end of their term, Metro (formerly The Other Cinema [TOC]) sadly but necessarily moved away from this area, not renewing the rights but, rather, concentrating on feature film distribution. For material on the excellent work of TOC, see Sylvia Harvey, in "The Other Cinema: A History, 1970–77," *Screen* 26, 6 (November/December 1985): 40–57; and *Screen* 27, 2 (March/April 1986): 80–96.
- 4 Alison Smith, *Agnès Varda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Carrie Tarr, *Diane Kurys* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Judith Mayne, *Directed by Dorothy Arzner* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994); Leslie Hill, *Marguerite Duras: Apocalyptic Desires* (London: Routledge, 1993).
- 5 Christina Lane, "From *The Loveless* to *Point Break*: Kathryn Bigelow's Trajectory in Action," *Cinema Journal* 37, 4 (1998): 59–81.
- 6 Mayne, *Directed by Dorothy Arzner*, 1.
- 7 Tarr, *Diane Kurys*, 3.
- 8 Smith, *Agnès Varda*, 17.
- 9 Tarr, *Diane Kurys*, 4.
- 10 Ibid., 5.
- 11 See Brigitte Rollet's book, *Coline Serreau* (Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press: St. Martin's Press, 1998).
- 12 An excellent reader on the subject is John Caughie's *Theories of Authorship* (London: RKP/BFI, 1981).
- 13 Eric Rohmer (Maurice Schérer), "Renoir Américain," *Cahiers du Cinéma*, 8 (January 1952): 33–40, extracted and translated in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 38–9. My quotations here all come from extracts chosen by John Caughie (1981) to represent the *Cahiers* position (although obviously not with the slant I am now giving them).
- 14 Pierre Kast, "Des confitures pour un gendarme," *Cahiers du Cinéma* 2 (January 1951): 40, extracted and translated in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 38.
- 15 Jacques Rivette, "Notes sur une révolution," *Cahiers du Cinéma* (special issue on American cinema), 54 (Christmas 1955): 12–21, extracted and translated in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 41–2.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Fereydon Hoveyda, "La réponse de Nicholas Ray," *Cahiers du Cinéma* 107 (May 1960): 41–6, extracted and translated in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 42–3.
- 18 Rivette, "Notes sur une révolution," 41.
- 19 The dictionary definition of "virile" is: relating to, or having, the characteristics of an adult male; strong, forceful, vigorous. It surfaced in the fifteenth century and is probably based on a combination of the Latin words "vir," meaning man, and "vis," meaning strength.
- 20 The concern of the histogram was actually to show "British cinema's lack of what we would consider as talent."
- 21 Shirley Clarke had recently made *A Scary Time* (1960) and had possibly not long before completed *The Connection* (1961); Muriel Box had recently made *Too Young to Love* and *The Piper's Time* (both 1960).
- 22 V.F. Perkins, "Film Authorship: The Premature Burial," *Cine Action* 21/22 (1990). Edward Buscombe talks about "the notion of the 'divine spark,' which separates off the artist from ordinary mortals, which divides the genius from the journeyman." This idea seems particularly indebted to Romantic artistic theory. See "Ideas of Authorship," in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 24; see also Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977), 121–38, and in *Screen* 20, 1(1979): 13–29; originally published in *Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie* 63, 3 (1969): 73–104. Janet Staiger gives a useful (feminist) critique of this "Romantic auteurism" in "The Politics of Film Canons," in *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism*, ed. D. Carson, L. Dittmar, and J.R. Welsch (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 197–200.
- 23 Claire Johnston, "Women's Cinema as Counter Cinema," in *Notes on Women's Cinema* (London: Society for Education in Film and Television, 1973), 26–7.
- 24 Peter Wollen, "Conclusion," in *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, 2nd edn. (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1972), 168. See also Foucault, "What Is an Author?"
- 25 Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author" *Image-Music-Text* (London: Fontana, 1977 [1968]), 20.

- 26 One can wonder how far the texts mentioned earlier (i.e., those on Arzner, Bigelow, Kurys, Serreau, and Varda) will impinge upon the agenda of the wider debate about authorship.
- 27 On a BBC Radio discussion program, March 1999.
- 28 Dudley Andrew, *Concepts in Film Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 126.
- 29 John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson, eds., *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- 30 Ibid., 320.
- 31 See, for example, Colleen Keane, "Director as 'Adrenaline Junkie,'" in *Metro* 109 (1997): 22-7; Laura Rascaroli, "Steel in the Gaze: On POV and the Discourse of Vision in Kathryn Bigelow's Cinema," *Screen* 38, 3 (Autumn 1997): 232-46; Lane, "From *The Loveless* to *Point Break*"; Yvonne Tasker, "Bigger Than Life," *Sight and Sound* 9, 5 (May 1999): 12-15; and the forthcoming collection on Bigelow, edited by Deborah Jermyn and Sean Redmond.
- 32 Extremely important in this context is Kaja Silverman's *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), especially the chapter entitled "The Female Authorial Voice." Interestingly, Leslie Hill's book on Duras does not problematize the notion of authorship, and in his chapter entitled "Images of Authorship," he goes right into talking about Duras's work in terms of, for example, authorial persona and performativity, authorial commentary and self-commentary, and authority.
- 33 See Smith, *Agnès Varda*, 13-15.
- 34 Varda, "Varda par Agnès," *Cahiers du Cinéma* (1994): 14, translated in Alison Smith, *Agnès Varda*, 14.
- 35 As Ginette Vincendeau indicated in Hill and Church Gibson, *Oxford Guide*, 444.

The Men with the Movie Cameras

Richard Koszarski

Richard Koszarski teaches film history in the Department of English at Rutgers University in New Jersey and is the editor-in-chief of *Film History: An International Journal*. His books include *Fort Lee*, *The Film Town*, *Von: The Life and Films of Erich von Stroheim*, *An Evening's Entertainment: The Age of the Silent Feature Picture* and *The Man You Loved to Hate: Erich von Stroheim and Hollywood*. This article on the importance of cinematographers in expressing the look and the vision of a film originally appeared in the New York magazine *Film Comment* in 1972. Noting the historical marginalization of the cameraman in favor of the director in early Hollywood cinema, Koszarski discusses the eclectic internationalized nature of the Hollywood style of cinematography generally as a context for understanding the distinctive work of specific cinematographers individually and sometimes in their relationship with individual directors.

When applying the spotlight theory of film history, attention is directed from one "golden age" to another, flitting back and forth across Europe, back and forth across the Atlantic, following the cinematic muse as it settles first with one national cinema and then another. This theory is quite serviceable in the writing of cursory film histories, but always raises the problem of specifically delineating each national cinema to which the author seeks to attribute greatness. Those who apply this technique most strictly tend to choose movements that are easy to talk about in terms commonly employed in literary analysis. It is a strong thematic quality which unites the Soviet, German, or post-war Italian schools for these writers, and any utilization of editing, design or camerawork is shuffled uncomfortably to a far corner and discussed as ancillary technique. This is only to be expected, given the state of film historical study and the predilections of

many film historians. Occasionally the more daring among them will try to relate the "style" of a particular movement to the "content" of that movement, but seldom will you find any admission that the style is the movement, and the way a story is told is the story. Our conditioned vocabularies resist defining a movement in terms of juxtaposition or special relationships, and consequently, the only film movements that get generally discussed as movements are those who have a strong and unifying thematic core susceptible to analysis in literary fashion.

When film criticism grew into a more artist-centered format, it was still these thematic values that dominated the conversation. Directors, even such obvious visual stylists as Ophüls or Dreyer, were discussed primarily in terms of the story content of their work, certainly a strange approach for criticism of this most modern of art forms. Recently the grip