HOLLYWOOD FILMS OF THE SEVENTIES

by Seth Cagin and Philip Dray

(New York, Harper & Row, 1984)

Not that of narrativity (as in that audacious cut-de-sac comparison 'the classical realist text') but of degrees. How do movies move? How do they organize space/time? How do they catch us up, move us? Which particular 'is' did you have in mind, Philip? The marketing categories—'the audience'! Or those doubling and , and fragmenting social identities that produce that completely new (on this, yes, I mean) separation which can also be linked to pleasure and pain, fearful dread and perilous joy. That combinatorial is what cinema is and hardly anyone is prepared to face the degree of this new kind of social difference. In cinema we find a separation that is qualitatively different. In ordinary social relations, love and hate desire proximity, whereas separation involves distance and loss. Cinematic separation is a place to enshrine a certain 'I to be, seen, play, gamble. All cultural productions are like this, of course, their real subject is the subjectivity who constructively subjects, watches, waits, being there and not being there. But this is all about difference, and Cagin and Dray are guiltily indifferent of that consciousness; they are, as with all book-style wrapping—or better, writerly style—some specific (also inaccurate) 'history in vision'.

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