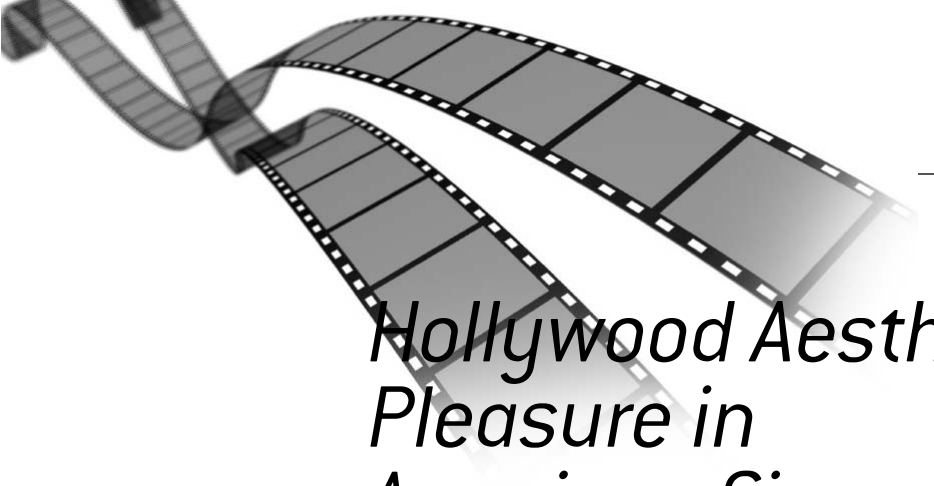

Hollywood Aesthetic: Pleasure in American Cinema

A Reply to Critics

Todd Berliner

Abstract: In this reply to four commentaries on my book, *Hollywood Aesthetic: Pleasure in American Cinema*, I address several conceptual and methodological issues raised by the respondents. Those issues include the book's focus on aesthetic pleasure; the functions of narrative, style, ideology, and genre in Hollywood cinema; the relationship between ideology and aesthetics; the use of scientific research in the humanities; normative aesthetic evaluations; real versus hypothetical spectators; and the practices of aesthetic film analysis.

Keywords: aesthetics, American cinema, cognitive science, film style, Hollywood, mass art, narrative, pleasure, reception studies.

What a privilege to have such an accomplished and intellectually diverse group of scholars respond to my book. I want to organize my reply around that intellectual diversity since each respondent has offered a set of criticisms of *Hollywood Aesthetic* that reflects a distinct approach to film scholarship: philosophical aesthetics, psychology, reception studies, and the aesthetic analysis of Hollywood narrative and style. Each respondent has, in her or his own way, spoken to the capacities—both the potentials and the limitations—of the approach I have taken in the book, and I want to use this reply to address some of the larger conceptual issues they have raised. Since each respondent has tackled this assignment in a distinctive way, I shall respond to the articles in turn.

Murray Smith, "Berlinversions"

Murray Smith approaches *Hollywood Aesthetic* from the perspective of philosophical aesthetics, engaging some of the book's theoretical arguments and interventions. He notes some conceptual distinctions between my book and earlier examinations of Hollywood aesthetics, most notably David Bordwell's chapters on classical narration in two books, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* (Bordwell et al. 1985) and *Narration in the Fiction Film* (Bordwell 1985). Smith

Volume 14, Issue 2, Summer 2020: 90–101 © Berghahn Books
ISSN 1934-9688 (Print), ISSN 1934-9696 (Online)

says, for instance, that Bordwell focuses on the "ordinary" film, while *Hollywood Aesthetic* examines both ordinary and extraordinary achievements, and that Bordwell relies primarily on Russian Formalism for his theoretical framework, whereas *Hollywood Aesthetic* turns more toward Anglo-American aesthetic philosophy. But I want to point to a more important difference, at least to my mind: Bordwell addresses the *comprehension* of Hollywood cinema, whereas *Hollywood Aesthetic* addresses the *pleasure* of it. Chalk it up to the anxiety of influence, but I think the distinction matters. As I noted in my précis, Hollywood makes the most widely successful pleasure-giving artworks the world has ever known. More than any other historical mode of art, Hollywood has systematized the delivery of aesthetic pleasure, packaging and selling it on a massive scale. Film studies had no account of this astonishing artistic accomplishment.

Hollywood makes the most widely successful pleasure-giving artworks the world has ever known.

Smith directs his criticisms of *Hollywood Aesthetic* to Part 3 on style and Part 4 on ideology in Hollywood cinema. I am going to ignore all of the lovely things he, and the other respondents, had to say about my book and focus on the more provocative negative criticisms.

Smith correctly separates my examination of Hollywood style into two categories: primary functions (clarity and expressiveness) and secondary ones (decoration, harmony, and dissonance). He points out, with an adroit turn to *Chinatown* (Roman Polanski, 1974), that in my system the same device can serve both harmony and dissonance, leading him to conclude that "either the model needs some revision, or we have to accept the somewhat counterintuitive and oxymoronic idea of an elegantly dissonant film." I choose neither option.

Is it really counterintuitive to think that the same device may harmonize with one part of a film and conflict with another? The examples of *Chinatown*, in Smith's article, and *Leave Her to Heaven* (John M. Stahl, 1945), in *Hollywood Aesthetic*, illustrate the play of harmony and dissonance that artists engage in regularly: Salvador Dali playing with the harmonies and dissonances between the practices of realism and surrealism; The Beatles creating pleasing harmonies and dissonances by combining Anglo-American rock music with Indian sitar music; James Joyce and Virginia Woolf finding harmonies between the dissonant practices of stream of consciousness and the conventions of the novel; and so on. The history of art is a catalogue of artists' efforts to violate expectations through one form of dissonance or another, even as artists work out intriguing harmonies between otherwise dissonant elements. This conclusion is not counterintuitive—it is unavoidable.

His second criticism of Part 3 boils down, I think, to a misunderstanding. I would blame the misunderstanding on him, except that Patrick Keating has a similar criticism, which I address below. So I guess it is my fault, and I want to take special care now to untangle my point.

A scriptwriter could stage a Bond movie in a basement apartment, but it is more decorative to stage the action in Istanbul, The Bahamas, or Amsterdam.

About my efforts to "isolate and evaluate Hollywood style" independent of storytelling (Berliner 2017, 95), Smith writes, "I think that in the Hollywood aesthetic one runs out of road for *purely* decorative uses of style almost immediately." He's right. Hollywood cinema offers few "uses" of style that seem purely decorative, serving no narrative function, but that does not stop us, as analysts, from *isolating* and *evaluating* a device's decorative function independent of its storytelling function. James Bond movies regularly take place in foreign locales, such as Istanbul (*From Russia with Love* [Terence Young, 1963]), The Bahamas (*Thunderball* [Terence Young, 1965]), and Amsterdam (*Diamonds Are Forever* [Guy Hamilton, 1971]). The films have integrated each locale into their narratives, but we can "isolate and evaluate" the locales' decorative functions. We can say that Istanbul looks ancient, The Bahamas picturesque, Amsterdam elegant, etc. Eventually, we will hit a narrative intersection, but I want us to see how far we can get *in our analysis* before we cross one. Much of a Hollywood budget finances the decorative value (sometimes referred to as "production value") of a movie (beautiful locations, glamourous mansions, special effects, fight choreography, elaborate sets, bravura cinematography, etc.). If decoration did not add some independent value to a film, then why would a production spend so much money on it? A scriptwriter could stage a Bond movie in a basement apartment, but it is more decorative to stage the action in Istanbul, The Bahamas, or Amsterdam. So I am not arguing, as Smith suggests I might be, that Hollywood favors purely decorative flourishes. Rather, I am exhorting analysts of Hollywood cinema to attend to the decorative functions of devices that may serve narrative functions as well.

Smith's critique of my ideology chapters offers a more complex set of points pertaining to ideological criticism of the arts—too complex to address in this brief reply—so I will focus on just one of Smith's points because doing so helps define the book's scope.

Rather than look at Hollywood as an instrument of dominant ideology's oppressive goals, as previous scholars have done, we can look at ideology as an instrument of Hollywood's aesthetic goals.

In Part 4 of the book, I argue that, rather than look at Hollywood as an instrument of dominant ideology's oppressive goals, as previous scholars have done, we can look at ideology as an instrument of Hollywood's aesthetic goals. Smith seems to appreciate the "inversion," as he calls it, but suggests that I might be leaving behind some of the effects of ideology on people's attraction to artworks. To quote Smith:

> *We may agree with him that Hollywood as a system is geared toward delivering a particular kind of aesthetic pleasure (normally expressed in terms of "entertainment") and that that principle dominates the ideological ends of filmmakers working in this tradition. But not without exception: in some films, the articulation of a particular political, moral, or ideological perspective has to be balanced with the entertainment principle.*

Citing *Selma* (Ava DuVernay, 2014), Smith notes that viewers "will likely have a moral-ideological motivation to see the film."

I agree with Smith's conclusion, but I want to clarify that *Hollywood Aesthetic* does not attempt to account for *all* attraction to Hollywood cinema, only aesthetic attraction. People have other reasons for seeing a Hollywood movie, including, for instance, fantasy, sexual excitement, participation in a cultural event, boredom during a global pandemic, and a film's moral-ideological content. Some viewers may choose to see *Selma* in order to better understand the wisdom of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to share that wisdom with their children, or to learn about the history of the civil rights movement. Those may be good reasons to see and appreciate *Selma*, but they are not aesthetic reasons. "Aesthetic appreciation of art," philosopher Jerrold Levinson writes, "always acknowledges the vehicle of the work as essential, never focusing only on detachable meanings or effects" (1996, 7). Smith, of course, understands this caveat and says as much: "The ideological content of Hollywood films still matters," he writes, "but it matters aesthetically rather than in a directly ideological fashion." The tricky cases (which I address extensively in the three chapters of Part 4) involve films that bond their ideological content to the audience's aesthetic experience, such as *The Asphalt Jungle* (John Huston, 1950), *Die Hard* (John McTiernan, 1988), *The Last Temptation of Christ* (Martin Scorsese, 1988), *Starship Troopers* (Paul Verhoeven, 1997), and other films in which ideological properties attach to the aesthetic design, sometimes in complex ways.

Hollywood Aesthetic, however, barely addresses cases in which a film's nonaesthetic content enhances or detracts from its aesthetic appeal.[1] The "detachable" messages of Dr. King, for instance, may enhance one's aesthetic appreciation of *Selma*'s design. By the same token, a film's moral-ideological flaws may lead to aesthetic flaws. I can hardly imagine wholeheartedly rooting for a white supremacist Western hero or a misogynistic noir hero, whatever the film's formal manipulations, without some resistance, and that resistance may damage the aesthetic effect. I think Smith's argument that "the ideology of a Hollywood film is not always a matter of complete indifference to viewers" pertains especially to these types of cases.

James Cutting, "Goldilocks Aesthetics"

Whereas Smith approached *Hollywood Aesthetic* philosophically, from the top down, psychologist James Cutting came at it from the bottom up, examining the empirical basis for some of the book's arguments. Although I did not conceive of *Hollywood Aesthetic* as a psychology book, I wanted to get the science right. Based on Cutting's response, I think I did okay. I would not say that I put my foot in my mouth but maybe a few toes.

As Cutting notes, researchers have debated the validity and interpretation of psychologist Daniel Berlyne's (1971) experimental findings regarding he-

donic value. Researchers seem to agree that Berlyne discovered *something*, although perhaps something trivial (Kubovy 1999), and some have reinterpreted his results using models other than Berlyne's psychobiological theory (Silvia 2005). In any case, what Berlyne found remains a subject of some debate.

In my defense, the book does not lean on Berlyne as heavily as Cutting suggests. First of all, I would not say that my book is "grounded" primarily in psychology, although I am heartened that a psychologist of Cutting's stature believes that it is. Psychology provides one type of evidence that I use for reasons explained below. However, the book is *grounded* in the arts and humanities, particularly in film aesthetics. That said, I wanted to develop and assess my theories of aesthetic experience in light of the current understanding of the human mind. Were the book's theories empirically demonstrable and consistent with scientifically obtained knowledge? The literature in experimental psychology enabled me to formulate and evaluate some of *Hollywood Aesthetic*'s empirical claims.

Were the book's theories empirically demonstrable and consistent with scientifically obtained knowledge?

Second, I would not agree that Berlyne's research is "the psychological theory on which Berliner bases his work." *Hollywood Aesthetic* employs a variety of experimental psychology research to try to understand the aesthetic appeal of Hollywood cinema, research not only in hedonic psychology but also in the psychology of humor, emotion, insight, expertise, interest, processing fluency, coping, aesthetics, well-being, and other areas. As Cutting notes, the Berlyne studies fail to capture the "multidimensional" components of aesthetic experience, focusing solely on the simplistic finding that people prefer objects that meet their optimal levels of novelty and complexity. I attempted to capture as many dimensions as I could in light of relevant empirical research.

Most readers of this journal know of the controversy in film studies concerning the applicability of scientific research to our understanding of film. I would like to explain my reasons for employing science research in parts of *Hollywood Aesthetic* because they speak to that debate.

As a film analyst and aesthetic researcher, I use various rationalist approaches to understanding film aesthetics. Primarily, I study the formal properties of movies against their historical background, but formal analysis addresses only part of the aesthetic equation—the objective properties of the artwork itself. Cognitive science offers empirical information pertaining to the other part of the equation—the viewer's mind.

Aesthetic analysis normally involves normative judgments—judgments based on reasons—but philosophers have also acknowledged the subjective component of aesthetics. Aesthetic properties are "response-dependent" in that they rely on "human perception" and connect to our "experience" of an artwork (Carroll 1999). Reason alone cannot establish that "*Casablanca* is a beautiful movie." Such judgments require subjective experience. So, in

addition to relying on reasons, *Hollywood Aesthetic* turns to actual viewer responses as an indicator of aesthetic value. We can try to access those responses from various historical sources, such as box office figures, accounts of cult film practices, movie reviews, audience ratings, interviews, awards, reports of filmmaking practices, biographical information, and other historical information, all of which may be found in the book; however, experimental psychology offers aesthetic researchers an additional source, helping us form models of aesthetic experience. Indeed, I found, when writing my book, an abundance of experimental research, far more than I anticipated, that helped me understand the aesthetic pleasures that Hollywood cinema has to offer. The fact that both psychology researchers and Hollywood filmmakers seem primarily concerned with "average spectators" makes the research particularly relevant to Hollywood aesthetics.

Employing psychology research in humanities projects like mine comes with challenges and pitfalls. For one thing, experimental psychology rarely addresses the exact artworks studied, so the aesthetic analyst ends up speculating about the applicability of the research.[2] For another, although the standards of evidence are high in the sciences, we cannot assume that scientifically obtained knowledge is entirely reliable, a factor evidenced by the replication crisis going on right now in some social science and medical research. But Cutting's response to my book points to a more serious problem that arises when the humanities turns to scientific research: As humanities scholars, we are tourists in the sciences.[3] I read hundreds of books and articles in psychology to write *Hollywood Aesthetic*, but I am not a psychologist. I was not even aware of most of the research that Cutting references in his article, let alone trained to scientifically evaluate the disagreements. Cutting, for instance, points to failed efforts to replicate Berlyne's experiments, as well as recent studies that lend support to Berlyne's findings (though perhaps not his explanations). The science here is not settled, despite decades of research, and the remaining scientific controversy creates hazards for a humanities researcher like me.

As humanities scholars, we are tourists in the sciences.

At last year's conference of the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image, media psychologist Ed Tan and I had a brief discussion about the difficulty and dangers of using research outside of one's home discipline. Ed argued that humanities researchers should therefore keep abreast of the latest findings in psychology. I argued the opposite. I think we should ignore the latest findings and stick to the stuff that has shown some staying power, especially since even time-tested research like Berlyne's remains a subject of some debate. As a humanities researcher, I lack the scholarly equipment to gauge the current controversies in psychology and which paradigms we can expect to shift in the future. I have enough trouble keeping track of that stuff in my own discipline.

Although grounded in the humanities, *Hollywood Aesthetic* looks to pertinent scientific research for feedback, the most reliable and uncontroversial research I could find pertaining to the perception, cognition, and aesthetic appreciation of cinema and the other arts. The fact that this research falls outside of the book's home discipline does not relieve me from having to grapple with it and assess my own arguments in light of scientific discoveries. Given the amount of available psychology research relevant to Hollywood aesthetics, I considered it irresponsible to proceed as though the research did not exist.

Janet Staiger, "Speculating about Spectatorship"

Janet Staiger offers a different type of bottom-up perspective—the perspective of reception studies, which examines the ways in which real spectators receive, interpret, and use artworks. Staiger questions how well my book accounts for "actual historical" responses to Hollywood movies, as opposed to the responses of "hypothetical" spectators who engage in supposedly "standard or typical spectatorial activities."

If one abandons the notion of shared standards and common viewing activities, then the concept of aesthetic value becomes meaningless.

Her question applies to any approach to art that addresses aesthetic value (as opposed to individual taste). Value is normative. If one abandons the notion of shared standards and common viewing activities, then the concept of aesthetic value becomes meaningless. Elsewhere, Staiger (2000) has disputed the notion of "presumed" normative standards and viewing activities. Here she argues,

> *Berliner's general theses are very much worth examining, accepting, and using to explain knowledgeable and cooperative spectatorial aesthetic responses to films, but that, for any actual textual study, recognition of historical and otherwise variable spectators must be included in the analysis to describe and explain the aesthetic pleasures (and displeasures) of the text.*

Addressing *Red River* (Howard Hawks, 1948), she analyzes some of same plot patterns analyzed in my book, using an "alternate explanation," and concludes "that two 'expert' critics can take the same film and read it differently, one seeing gaps that require finessing and the other seeing rhyming and revising patterns." Given such differences, Staiger questions how we can determine a "correct" aesthetic analysis. "To move to any sort of actual case," she argues, "requires lots of variations and stipulations and parsing," a fact that would seem to question the explanatory power of a "hypothetical" spectator and of any "broad theory" of Hollywood aesthetics.

Disagreements about individual film analyses do not necessarily undermine my book's effort to understand some of the general aesthetic principles

that govern Hollywood filmmaking. Indeed, I do not think her "alternate" analysis of *Red River* offers evidence against the explanatory power of studies, like mine, that rely on notions of common viewing activities, hypothetical spectators, and shared aesthetic standards. For one thing, much of what Staiger says about *Red River* accords with the analysis in *Hollywood Aesthetic*, which argues that *Red River* "can risk some trivial story logic violations and still remain anchored to classical cinema's structure and purpose" (81). The fact that our analyses agree in many respects suggests that the film sparks some common viewing activities among some viewers.

However, let us accept for a moment that our analyses disagree at least on whether the movie contains *any* story logic violations, trivial or not. We can still view her and my commentary on *Red River*, set side by side, not as different *experiences* of the film but as different *analyses* of the film. Indeed, Staiger has not so much described her personal response to *Red River* as she has instead offered an analysis of the film based on normative matters relevant to determining the film's aesthetic value (rhyming patterns, coherence, theme and variation, progress toward resolution, available historical information, genre considerations, etc.). She has, in short, offered *reasons* for appreciating the film's narrative design. So I would argue that her analysis of *Red River* better supports my point that aesthetic analysis depends on normative matters than it supports her point that "actual historical" spectators differ from "hypothetical" ones. Her *Red River* spectator is just as hypothetical as mine, both of which are based on a combination of subjective experience and reasoning. The fact that our analyses disagree in some respects suggests that one of us may have some things wrong, that we may be emphasizing different aesthetic properties, or that there may be more than one "correct" aesthetic analysis of the film. Whichever the case, Staiger's illuminating narrative analysis of *Red River* has employed normative standards that help make our understanding of the film's aesthetic value more complete.

Indeed, I am struck by how much of Staiger's analysis of *Red River* articulates my own experience of the film. Of course, we cannot know precisely how similar our experiences really are, but it is reasonable to believe that she and I and other historical spectators might like or dislike *Red River* for some of the same reasons. How could Hollywood filmmakers make movies if they did not have some sense of whether people, generally, might enjoy them? Hollywood, after all, makes mass artworks. If spectator responses varied so much (or if spectators did not at least fall into huge response groups), then filmmakers could not make mass art, and no one would fund it. Hollywood filmmaking banks on the assumption that a film can at least guide the responses of a massive number of viewers. And if filmmakers can create a mass response, then scholars can study it.

How could Hollywood filmmakers make movies if they did not have some sense of whether people, generally, might enjoy them?

Staiger rightly questions what a book like *Hollywood Aesthetic* does and does not achieve. The book is an aesthetic study—an effort to understand the aesthetic properties that Hollywood filmmakers developed to appeal to a mass audience. It does not offer a historical account of Hollywood film reception. The book studies film reception to the extent that reception can help us understand the subjective component of aesthetics. Indeed, as I noted in my reply to James Cutting above, the book not only makes normative claims about Hollywood films but also uses historical and scientific evidence to make empirical claims about "actual historical" spectators. However, even when the book examines cult film aesthetics and other film niches, it focuses on normative matters—normative for the niche. If groups of spectators did not share evaluative standards, people could not even argue over whether a film was any good or not. And though a focus on normativity and mass response sets to the side idiosyncratic responses to art, the book argues that we can theorize Hollywood aesthetics in part by attending to the experiences that people seem to share and by modeling some of the variables that lead to individual, historical, and group differences in aesthetic experience.

If groups of spectators did not share evaluative standards, people could not even argue over whether a film was any good or not.

Patrick Keating, "Style and Storytelling in the Hollywood Aesthetic"

Patrick Keating approaches *Hollywood Aesthetic* from the perspective of an aesthetic analyst of Hollywood narrative and style. Keating has made major contributions in both areas, and I want to address some of the particulars of his arguments, which are nuanced. In general, Keating argues that *Hollywood Aesthetic* "understates the aesthetic value of unity and clarity" and treats "disunity and ambiguity . . . as nonnarrative or even antinarrative features." As a result, he argues, the book neglects some aesthetic values to be found in Hollywood cinema.

I first want to argue that the theories advanced in *Hollywood Aesthetic* can account for many of the aesthetic experiences Keating describes and that the analytical techniques illustrated in the book can be used to explain some of the pleasures that Keating says I neglect. For instance, he writes: "I wonder whether there are unified pleasures that he overlooks—such as the pleasure of watching an actor get the interpretation of a complex but coherent character just right." But does this example qualify as "unified pleasure"? I think we can better describe it as the pleasure of finding "uniformity amidst variety," to quote Francis Hutcheson ([1725] 2008, I.II.§III), a key concept in *Hollywood Aesthetic*. Keating wants to stress the unity of the performance, but we could just as well stress the complexity (what Hutcheson calls the "variety") of the character. An artwork creates unity by joining different things. *Hollywood Aesthetic* argues that the challenges posed by joining different things leads us toward exhilarated pleasure, as the separate pieces of a film either resist union or snap together with a satisfying click. So "watching an actor get the interpretation of

a complex but coherent character just right" does not serve as a counterexample to those in *Hollywood Aesthetic*; it is, rather, an illustration of one of the book's central points.

Keating's "more technical" criticism, I believe, is that I want to have my cake and eat it too when I try "to count the same technique as evidence of both" unity and disunity. In one part of the book, for instance, delay in a narrative holds a movie together by connecting different plot elements (unity), whereas in another part of the book delay pulls a movie apart by separating different plot elements (disunity). This contradiction, he says, points to an ambiguity about whether I am using an "objectivist" or "functionalist" definition of narrativity. Keating concludes that I am mostly functionalist but that I eat the objectivist cake when I want it.

Hollywood Aesthetic ***argues that the challenges posed by joining different things leads us toward exhilarated pleasure, as the separate pieces of a film either resist union or snap together with a satisfying click.***

Keating is right that I regard narrative delay as an example of both unity and disunity because it is. Indeed, it is the kind of narrative device (like planting and payoff, deadlines, and twists) that Hollywood gravitates toward because the device accomplishes so much aesthetically—not just curiosity, suspense, and surprise, but also hypothesis formation, problem-solving, focused attention, insight, tension release, successful prediction, incongruity resolution, and interconnection.[4] I do not see a problem in the fact that a single device can fulfill multiple functions, even opposing functions.

Objectivist and functionalist approaches may treat "narrativity" in different ways (one approach may regard a device like delay as decreasing narrativity, the other as increasing it), but, as approaches to narrative analysis, they serve different purposes. Objectivist approaches help us explain the formal features of narratives, whereas functionalist approaches help us explain narrational effects. The approaches are not incompatible unless one is trying to determine whether a device increases or decreases narrativity. But if we are instead trying to determine what Hollywood narration is (objectively) and what it does to an audience (functionally), then we must take both approaches. Indeed, aesthetics, as I say above, relies on both objective reasoning and subjective experience.

Chapter 5 of *Hollywood Aesthetic* is fundamentally functionalist, organized around different aesthetic effects of Hollywood style. Keating argues that some of the devices that I "count as disunities or dissonances or even as antinarrative techniques" are not "antinarrative" in functionalist terms, since they produce narrative effects of suspense, curiosity, and surprise. I agree and say as much when I write: "Of course, at some point, it becomes impossible to separate almost any component of Hollywood film style from its narrative function; in Hollywood filmmaking, style and narrative inevitably intersect" (95). Indeed, I never describe such devices as "antinarrative"; that is Keating's term. I do, however, say that they offer pleasures "independent of whatever storytelling purposes they might *also* fulfill" (95, emphasis added). I wanted to show

in the chapter that we can gain aesthetic pleasures from Hollywood's stylistic properties *in* themselves—stylistic pleasures distinguishable from whatever narrative pleasures such properties may also offer us.

So, do I think Patrick Keating's criticisms have failed to land on *Hollywood Aesthetic*? I want to argue that I have dodged any hits, but I must acknowledge the impact of his larger point, as evidenced by his brief descriptions of some pleasures to be found in *All About Eve* (Joseph L. Mankiewicz, 1950), *Sweet Smell of Success* (Alexander Mackendrick, 1957), and *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941) and, in particular, by his extended aesthetic analysis of a sequence from *Sadie McKee* (Clarence Brown, 1934). The theories and analytical techniques I offer in the book, it turns out, cannot totally capture the aesthetic value of that sequence. I will, presumptuously, summarize Keating's larger point as follows: "Todd, you may think that you have offered a comprehensive appraisal of Hollywood's aesthetic capacity, but there is more to the Hollywood aesthetic than your book can account for." I think he is too kind to put his criticism so bluntly, so I put it that way myself and, grudgingly, agree.

Acknowledgments

I thank Murray Smith, James Cutting, Janet Staiger, and Patrick Keating for treating my book with such attention and seriousness.

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Notes

[1] See Carroll (1996).

[2] For a counterexample, see Timothy Justus's 2019 article in this journal, which includes humanities, behavioral science, and natural science research on the filmic uses of Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*.

[3] Malcolm Turvey (2020) points to this and some other problems with using science in film studies.

[4] For an examination of these various cognitive effects and the aesthetics of the "planting and payoff" device, see Berliner (2020).

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