

Not Another Teen Movie: Historical Essays on American Cinema and Youth

The relationships between American cinema and youth have been complex, shaping in diverse ways film production, distribution, exhibition, reception, and appropriation. Broadly speaking, the American youth market has long since been recognized as the engine driving the American movie business, with efforts to appeal to the hearts, minds, and pockets of young people underwriting the conduct of creative and commercial personnel operating in Hollywood, across the American independent sector, and even based overseas (see Doherty; Nowell). It can also be said that, as highly committed yet supposedly impressionable consumers, young people - Americans or otherwise - have featured prominently in public sphere discourse, often as the objects of adult concerns over their alleged susceptibility to the apparent rabble-rousing, stupefying or narcotizing effects of consuming too much, or the “wrong kind” of American cultural product (see Biltereyst). Conversely, American cinema is understood as a youth-friendly cinema that plays important roles in the lives of many young people across the globe (see Meers). Such points notwithstanding, the specific character of these relationships remains loosely sketched and is currently supported by only a handful of case studies. This situation has arisen in part because scholarly attention has tended to be focused towards on-screen images of young Americans and towards diagnosing certain teenpics, fads, and representational tropes as symptoms of the broader psychological, social, and political backdrops against which they took form (see Lewis; Shary). An inevitable by-product of the longstanding and continued pre-eminence of such approaches in both scholarly and popular circles (see Bernstein) has been the erection of canons of touchstone films and trends as well as the dissemination of reductive notions of youths as malleable consumers, which, as a whole, have served to erase many of the nuances characterizing this rich and multifaceted aspect of cinema history. Developing new lines of enquiry into the intersections of youth and American cinema is therefore both salient and timely; *Not Another Teen Movie* aims to do so through a series of case studies, characterized by the application of the diverse theoretically-underpinned, empirically researched approaches known collectively as the New Film History (see Chapman, Glancy, and Harper), that is intended to broaden understandings of, shed new light on, and make substantial revisions to, this key area of cinema studies.

Accordingly, and with these points very much in mind, proposals are sought for original essays exploring the historical dimensions of American cinema and youth across the twentieth century and into the new millennium, both in American film culture as well as in other national contexts. Suggested topics for this proposed edited collection include but are not limited to:

- Industrial conceptions of youth shaping the content of specific films or film types
- Targeting specific youth sub-demographics, taste formations, and subcultures
- The American youth market and art cinema/American independent cinema
- Overseas companies targeting the America youth market
- Revising understandings of prominent teen film subgenres, cycles, and fad

- Illuminating overlooked, marginal, or forgotten trends in youth-oriented cinema
- Youth behind the camera
- The construction and dissemination of youth stars
- Marketing films to American youth
- Marketing American youth films to other age-groups
- Marketing American youth cinema overseas
- American youth and film merchandizing strategies
- Delivering films to American youth - theatrical and non-theatrical distribution
- Showing films to youth - theatrical exhibition and non-theatrical delivery
- Parallel industries catering to young American movie-watchers
- Elites' responses to American youth (on the screen and in front of it)
- Youth audiences on American cinema
- Youth fan cultures and American cinema
- Youth (re)appropriating and re-inscribing American cinema

Please send by 31 October 2011 your 200-400 word abstract along with a 50-100 academic biography to richard_nowell@hotmail.com. All notifications of acceptance will be emailed no later than 30 November 2011. If an abstract is accepted, essays are expected to be between 7,500 and 8,000 words in length (including references).

Richard Nowell teaches American Cinema at Charles University in Prague. He is the author of *Blood Money: A History of the First Teen Slasher Film Cycle*, has served as a guest editor of *Illuminace: The Journal of Film Theory, History, and Aesthetics*, and his articles have been published or are forthcoming in, among others, *Cinema Journal*, *Journal of Film and Video*, *Post Script*, and *The New Review of Film and Television Studies*.

Works Cited

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