Alphaville: A *Journal of Film and Screen Media. AlphavilleJoumal.com.* Web. ISSN 2009-4078.

Rigorous scientific research, but with novel perspectives in analysis. For those who are familiar with the reading of journals for academic research in the Humanities, we cannot avoid this parallel spirit in the young journal *Alphaville*, the first online-based journal produced in Ireland exclusively for film and visual media studies.

Throughout its four issues, this journal has maintained a traditional outline in its structure. *Alphaville* has organized its material in a schema that contains firstly an editorial, then a section for extensive, well-researched and very detailed articles, followed by a section for reviews of bibliographical novelties, and finally a section for reports on film festivals and other media-related events.

The fourth issue of *Alphaville* reflects on gender identities and sexual borders through very different academic perspectives. The first written by Melissa DeAnn Seifert, reports on the use of female characters in blaxploitation cinema and focuses on the implications of these constructions in a cinematic atmosphere typically moved by patriarchal models and heteronormativity. Seifert argues that female characters in this genre were consciously designed to refute the notion of sisterhood and solidarity among women that was actually taking place at the moment of these productions during the late 1960s and early 1970s. These films also function as an expression of a male consciousness that, because of its fear of female empowerment, consciously proposed cinematographic constructions designed to reinforce male domination. Any representation of lesbianism and female sisterhood within the blaxplotation cinema is informed by otherness.

Emerson Fillman Richards assesses the construction of sexuality in the two men linked to Lolita in Kubrick's and Lyne's films, and contrasts them with Nabokov’s version.This provides the framework for an explanation of the desexualization of Humbert Humbert and the hypersexualization of Clare Quilty in both films. In Kubrick's version, which strongly contextualizes Lolita (Sue Lyon) within suburban American life, Quilty (Peter Sellers) appears as the other to the heteronormativity's life model and therefore, hypersexualized and linked to the queer subculture.

By contrast, Richards points out that in this cinematographic version, Humbert (James Mason) makes numerous obvious attempts to distance himself from his counter-normative behaviors: to show himself as part of the normative cultural paradigm of the time, insisting on his emotional and loving link to Lolita rather than an erotic one. In the sexualization of Quilty, Kubrick insists on reconstructing the character as a villain, although Lolita recognizes herself in love with this subversive and countercultural male. Lyne's version insists on retaining in its filmic narration several of the novel's sex-scenes involving Lolita (Dominique Swain) and Humbert (Jeremy Irons). Richards concludes that while Kubrick shows the sexuality of the characters in conflict with their social norms, the construction of Lyne deals more directly with forms of moral, ethics and sexual construction within mainstream American cultures of the late 1990s.

Dina Mansour analyses the extent of censorship in the Egyptian cinematographic context, the most productive within the Arab film industry. Films like *The Yacoubian Building* (2006) — which contains explicit reference to sexualities and homosexuality - *Cairo Exit* (2009) — which deals with inter-religious relations and premarital sex — or *Dunia* (2005) — which discuss forced genital mutilation in Egypt — have followed a variable and unstable path determined by censorship and moral prejudice. Mansour shows how the policies of official censorship bodies become part of the filmgoing audience's experience which often forces film directors to tone down their material in the hope of attracting a favorable reception.

The problematization of gender and sexualities is addressed in the article that closes the issue, where Ian Murphy reviews how the characters portrayed by Jennifer Jason Leigh often communicate ambiguous messages in terms of feminine identity. Murphy investigates how in *Last Exit to Brooklyn* (1989) this feature is particularly embodied in the character of Talala, through the playing with bisexuality and the temporary elimination of sexual difference within the postulation of a fractured identity.

Both "Towards an Embodied Poetics of Cinema: The Metaphoric Construction of Abstract Meaning in Film," and "Film Thinking and Narrative Indeterminacy" critically debate the construction of cinematographic images from different theoretical dimensions: the first article analyzes films like *Barry Lyndon* (1975) by applying the cognitive

model combined with David Bordwell's insights; the second raises questions about the ontological status of cinematographic narrative in films like *Stage Fright* (1950). Finally, Martina Witt-Jauch's article draws on Antoin Artaud's theater of cruelty as a means of rethinking the memory restoration of the central charactermin Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962).

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