

Hollywood Incoherent: Narration in Seventies Cinema

By Todd Berliner

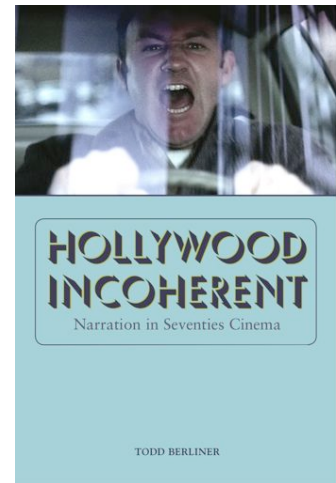
University of Texas Press, 2010

ISBN: 978-0-292-72279-8

utexas.edu/utpress/books/berhol.html

“... a bold and compelling study of the strange, paradoxical narrative style of seventies films.... [Berliner’s] lively prose and the delight he takes in explicating the classics of that era make this book a real pleasure to read.” — Stephen Prince

“This will undoubtedly become an essential book for future scholars of Seventies Hollywood.” —Joe McElhaney, *Film Comment*



When people talk about American cinema of the 1970s, they normally talk about movies they love and that inspired them to take American cinema seriously. When film scholars *study* seventies cinema, they normally study something else: culture and politics, the context from which the films emerged. In *Hollywood Incoherent: Narration in Seventies Cinema*, Todd Berliner studies the things people talk about. He studies seventies movies *as* movies: artistic works engineered to arouse experiences for spectators. And he focuses on the aspect of seventies cinema that, probably more than any other, draws people to films of the period: their peculiar manner of storytelling.

During the 1970s, mainstream American filmmakers regularly pursued a narrative design that challenged the harmony and felicity of Hollywood cinema. Although present since the early days of studio filmmaking, this relatively deviant design reached its greatest prominence, popularity, and intensity in the seventies, when filmmakers repeatedly set out to create the narrative disharmonies that their predecessors had spent so much energy trying to avoid.

Hollywood Incoherent examines not just formally eccentric films—*Nashville*, *Taxi Driver*, *The Godfather, Part II*, *A Clockwork Orange*, the films of John Cassavetes—but also mainstream Hollywood films, including *The Exorcist*, *The Godfather*, *The French Connection*, *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Chinatown*, *The Bad News Bears*, *Patton*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, *All the President’s Men*, *Annie Hall* and many others. It reveals fundamental aspects of seventies cinema that film scholarship has previously left undiscovered.

Hollywood Incoherent identifies the period’s defining narrational strategies and explains their aesthetic contribution to American cinema. It demonstrates the centrality of the seventies to the history of Hollywood’s formal development and the lasting impact of seventies modes of narration on contemporary film.

AUTHOR’S BIOGRAPHY

Todd Berliner is Professor of Film Studies at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, where he teaches American cinema, film narration, and film aesthetics. He was a Fulbright Scholar and founding chair of UNCW’s Film Studies Department.

For information and speaking engagements:

berlinert@uncw.edu 910-962-3336

www.uncw.edu/toddberliner