The pin-up, then, showed a range of attitudes towards women in postwar America, and as such entered the art world as a visual icon of Pop Art. This appropriation of the pin-up was not necessarily feminist, nor critical of commercial contexts. Yet such critique became a possibility during the following decade, through the development of countercultural civil rights activism, as well as critical art installation and performance practices. At the same time, a second wave of feminism developed that put the fight for sexual freedom high on the agenda.

A feminist third wave emerged during the 1980s, initially as a response by women of colour to a white dominance within the feminist movement. As a pluralist form of feminism, the third wave seems at once ubiquitous and invisible, including multiple political agendas. Resultant artwork utilizes contradictory images of femininity, recognizing multiple sexual, ethnic, racial and class identity subjectivities. Arguably, postmodernist feminist artists took the historical gains in sexual freedom for granted and ran away with it, producing their own images of female sexuality, at times queer, burlesque and critical. Buszbek's historical analysis shows that in its ambivalent representation of female sexuality, the pin-up offers a useful vehicle for feminist artists to explore such complex issues.

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hollywood heroines: women in film Noir and the female Gothic film

Helen Hanson, I.B. Tauris, London and New York, 2007, 256pp., ISBN 978-1-84511-561-6, £15.99 (paperback); ISBN 978-1-84511-562-3, £40.00 (hardback)

Helen Hanson's book casts a close eye on representations of women in the Hollywood genres of film noir and the gothic film, with an approach which takes in issues of genre, context and 1970s feminist film theory. Hanson sets out to confront what she views as two major faults in film noir criticism, challenging the delineation of noir women into the two oppositional categories of femme fatale and virginal redeemer, and aiming to correct the marginalisation of the female gothic film as a result of an overriding academic focus on film noir. The author's attempt to move readings of the female beyond the obviously stark and restrictive limitations of early feminist criticism has a ready appeal, and she forms a convincing argument for the consideration of the 'working-girl investigator' figure evident in films such as *I Wake Up Screaming* (1941), *Phantom Lady* (1944) and *The Dark Corner* (1946). Hanson draws an important

distinction in contextualising this characterisation, aligning the figure specifically with the white-collar female worker of World War II, who strategically chose a role in which she could more likely remain after the war's end. Narrative parallels are made evident with the 'woman's film', in which female independence is ultimately restrained through marriage. However, the 'working-girl investigator' has clear significance in outlining an active and progressive femininity in film noir distinguished from the narrow sexualised imagery of the femme fatale.

Hanson's championing of the female gothic film as an equally overlooked aspect of noir scholarship is similarly legitimate. As in the case of the woman's film and film noir, there are frequent overlaps in genre definition so that films like *Rebecca* (1940) and *The Two Mrs Carrolls* (1947) need to be considered anew from Hanson's perspective, and stylistic elements attributed to film noir reassessed. She argues that such films characterise marriage and female domesticity as sites of fear, conflict and anxiety, embodying women's concerns over the pressure to return to the home in the post-war climate (although *Rebecca* notably sits outside this timeframe). Discussions around the films' transformation of the female through costume and the use of portraiture to create alternative images of women engenders a sense of some of the stylistic and narrative markers of the genre. Hanson's argument for a progressive reading of these films, however, lacks some punch. While, as she contends, the male characters are frequently weakened by the first marriages which dominate this genre, and the female lead ultimately breaks free of comparative imaging, this climactic active empowerment arguably fails to reverse the depiction of female vulnerability and passivity which the films largely display – the inverse of the positive arguments around the woman's film. Perhaps further consideration might be given to the impact of the differing star personas of, for example, Joan Fontaine and Barbara Stanwyck on the ways in which these characterisations work.

Hanson presses forward to the 1980s and 1990s and examinations of the neo-noir thriller and the neo-gothic film to consider the impact of this altered context on female imaging. While the omission of the intervening decades is in the trend of discussions of film noir, future approaches to the neglected gothic film could usefully include a look at this untapped era, which would enhance the contextualisation of these genres and gender representations. Making links with film noir through the updating of the 'working-girl investigator' in the detective or lawyer figure evident in films such as *Suspect* (1987) and *Jagged Edge* (1985), and with the gothic film's visual style, Hanson considers the pervading ambivalence towards the female professional and sexual autonomy in a post-feminist age. The films' foregrounding of masculine intuition and their visual sexualisation of women otherwise characterised as post-second wave loveless career women as an illustration of the wider culture's problematic engagement with the contemporary single girl figure is ably argued, and could equally be extended beyond this generic approach to the broader cinematic backlash.

Hanson's book is largely effective in identifying key areas of lack in existing scholarship around female gendering in film noir and, particularly, in relation to the female gothic film, and in articulating arguments which demonstrate the importance of considering these fields anew. The limited focus on contemporary articles on the original subject of the gothic film is the book's only major omission. While an understandable result of the author's specific approach, the few brief references included are tantalising enough to encourage the extension of Hanson's project into 1940s criticism and alternative receptions. Ultimately, however, Hanson's work serves well as a valuable addition to Hollywood genre and gender studies.

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queer French: globalization, language, and sexual citizenship in France

Denis M. Provencher; Ashgate, Aldershot, UK, 2007, 236pp., ISBN 978-0-7546-4795-9, £55.00 (hardback)

Queer French engages with a series of questions related to queer citizenship against the specificities of the contemporary French republican (and thus universalising) backdrop. What makes the volume both useful and timely is Provencher's determination to ensure that this republican ideological backdrop be understood within a framework constructed through contemporary trends of globalisation, with a particular focus on their impact on gay popular cultures. Provencher has succeeded in producing a work here that will be of interest not only to scholars and researchers working in French and Francophone studies, but also to those with an interest in gender, gay and lesbian studies, globalisation and transnational cultural movements. In order to frame his own analyses, Provencher focuses on the use of language and the contribution it makes to the evolution of a transnational queer citizenship in contemporary metropolitan France. Language, here, is to be understood as not only encompassing republican discourses and the role played by a small number of canonical voices (Jean Genet and Jean-Paul Sartre, in particular), but also language usage on an individual, everyday basis, as the second part of the volume presents ethnographic data collated through interviews conducted in Paris and Lyon.

The study is clearly divided into two sections. The first sets out the two language traditions at work in the book, namely the language of non-specific difference