



Myth of the Western: New Perspectives on Hollywood's Frontier Narrative

Matthew Carter

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What is the nature of the relationship between the Hollywood Western and American frontier mythology? How have Western films helped develop cultural and historical perceptions, attitudes and beliefs towards the frontier? Is there still a place for the genre in light of revisionist histories of the American West?

Myth of the Western re-invigorates the debate surrounding the relationship between the Western and frontier mythology, arguing for the importance of the genre's socio-cultural, historical and political dimensions. Taking a number of critical-theoretical and philosophical approaches, Matthew Carter applies them to prominent forms of frontier historiography. He also considers the historiographic element of the Western by exploring the different ways in which the genre has responded to the issues raised by the frontier. Carter skilfully argues that the genre has - and continues to reveal - the complexities and contradictions at the heart of US society.

With its clear analyses of and intellectual challenges to the film scholarship that has developed around the Western over a 65-year period, this book adds new depth to our understanding of specific film texts and of the genre as a whole - a welcome resource for students and scholars in both Film Studies and American Studies.

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