



Hollywood Intellect

James D. Bloom

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Hollywood Intellect takes off from the wide-spread hand-wringing over the fate or disappearance of so-called public intellectuals. An account of the title phenomenon, *Hollywood Intellect* challenges assumptions on which such discussions have rested. James D. Bloom argues that such assumptions are the result of misleading inattention to the intellectual work that mass culture performs.

Much of America's influential intellectual work has come out of Hollywood, which has long helped shape America's intellectual agenda. Bloom shows how Hollywood movies often do intellectual work as ambitious as the intellectual work in "art films," poems and novels, museums and erudite quarterlies. *Hollywood Intellect* prompts its readers to reflect on the impact of a variety of Hollywood movies with some of the same assumptions, expectations, and questions customarily applied to literary writing. *Hollywood Intellect* also illustrates how, in examining the emergence of Hollywood and stardom in general as shapers of the public mind, some of our most renowned poets and novelists enriched our experience of mass entertainment *and* of elite culture. Drawing on a range of literary works and movies, as well as on the careers of both Hollywood and literary celebrities, Bloom documents how Hollywood regulates curiosity, arbitrates civilization, construes and probes stardom, polices genre, and shapes our language.

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