



From the Editor

As it developed, cinema gained in popularity by offering pleasures that viewers found easy to experience and understand. Faced with an uncommonly vivid and accessible medium, moviegoers responded enthusiastically to comedies and dramas, and filmmakers learned to craft stories and characters and to design images and image transitions that made intuitive sense and that sustained the fictional worlds on screen and the pleasures engendered by an immersive visual experience.

While viewers find most movies easy to understand, scholars, appropriately, do not. The intersection of movies and mind is complex and multifactoral, encompassing social, psychological, and biological domains. This issue of *Projections* highlights this complexity by focusing on the psychological, social, and physiological constituents of meaning and emotion in cinema.

Dirk Eitzen explains why zombies can be funny; his analysis of *Shaun of the Dead* integrates brain imaging studies with a humanistic understanding of the social and psychological underpinnings of humor, with results that clarify not just this film but also some fruitful connections between the sciences and the humanities.

DVDs renewed the popularity and appeal of television series because they made long-form viewing available in a concentrated form. Viewers could spend hours at a time watching multiple episodes of favorite series. A serial format, arguably, makes possible a different kind of parasocial relationship viewers and characters than does cinema, where individual feature films are the normative format. Robert Blanchet and Margrethe Bruun Vaage illuminate the pleasures of long-form televisual narratives, in particular the manner in which relationships between viewers and characters assume the characteristics of a friendship.

Movie advertising emphasizes current attractions, but movie lovers understand that dated films—movies that contain archaic elements—can be uniquely enjoyable. Robert Clewis examines the ways that dated films can evoke reactions of nostalgia, boredom, or comic amusement from viewers. Influencing aesthetic and affective meanings, datedness is engendered when one or more attributes of a film fails to achieve their ostensible aims because of the passage of time.

Where do beginnings end? Viewers make sense of screen narratives by parsing their structures, and filmmakers provide cues to assist this process. A viewer's attention typically is highest at a film's beginning, but beginnings must segue into mid-sections or second acts. Jason Gendler explains how this happens and how beginnings in cinema are commonly punctuated.

People watch movies in a seated position; movies (apparently) move, while viewers do not. Does this mean that proprioceptive knowledge is irrelevant to cinema? Maarten Coëgnarts and Peter Kravanja argue that embodied visual meaning, derived from the physical experience of our bodies in the world, is a key constituent of meaning in cinema, particularly abstract and conceptual meaning.

Jaimie Baron provides an illuminating perspective on the viewer's experience of archival images, that is, images that are deemed to be indexical referents of some place, event, or situation. Found footage, documentaries, filmic images taken as "evidence" are predicated upon a relationship between viewers and medium that Baron describes as the "archive effect." She thus offers a receptionist perspective on questions of indexicality in cinema.

The essays and book reviews collected here illuminate the multiple dimensions that connect movies and mind and the tenacity of contemporary scholars in their efforts to track an elegantly elusive medium.

Stephen Prince
