Psychocinematics

EXPLORING COGNITION AT THE MOVIES

Edited by Arthur P. Shimamura
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“Those of us who have spent years cheering for cognitive film theory have probably felt, from time to time, a depressing sense of failure as Žižek and friends grab the academic headlines yet again. Could *Psychocinematics* be the turning point? It could be. The essays are elegant and measured and they actually do some work in helping us to understand how films achieve their effects: here is work that effectively links film comprehension with the bits of psychology where we are making some progress in understanding the mind, and philosophy and neuroscience get on better here than they often do in discussions of the arts. I particularly like the cosmopolitan idea that brain science can join hands with Judith Butler in deconstructing the self. It’s time we left Fantasy Island for the real world of movie psychology, and *Psychocinematics* is set to take us there.”

— GREGORY CURRIE, Professor of Philosophy and Director of Research, Humanities, University of Nottingham

“Without doubt, *Psychocinematics* is the most comprehensive and up-to-date volume devoted to a long-neglected but important subject: the psychology of film. Of all artistic experiences, the cinematic experience is likely the most complex and rich from a purely psychological standpoint. Moreover, the breadth of perspectives is impressive, ranging from sensation, perception, and emotion to knowledge, narrative, and the theory of mind. Collectively, the chapter authors have set the research agenda for years to come.”

— DEAN KEITH SIMONTON, Distinguished Professor of Psychology, University of California, Davis, author of *Great Flicks*, and co-editor of *The Social Science of Cinema*

“Across the humanities, many disciplines are beginning to pay attention to cognitive theory and neuroscience, but the ‘cognitive turn’ in film studies began almost thirty years ago. Shimamura’s lively anthology shows how this tradition of research has evolved into a real dialogue between film scholars and psychologists. The volume provides us with a cutting-edge overview of the field—ranging across numerous topics from imperceptible eye movements to the visceral dynamics of emotion, with attention to both the philosophical underpinnings and the empirical discoveries of the field—and caps off this achievement by framing the whole enterprise with a new and memorable term, ‘psychocinematics.’”

— MURRAY SMITH, Professor of Film Studies, Director of the Aesthetics Research Centre, University of Kent