

Landsman found that mothers of children with disabilities purposively purchase culturally approved items to ease their children's acceptance by "normal" society while at the same time critiquing the consumer culture for commodifying the value of human life.

Another theme in the book is how the loss of an infant or child is mediated through consumption and commodification. A memorable essay by Danielle Wozniak investigates how foster mothers use objects such as stuffed animals and pictures when losing their foster children to adoption to cement this relationship across time and space. This use of objects to sustain relationships thereby distinguishes their work from merely serving the state's interest to that of being a real parent to these children. Loss of social identity and geographically bound roots through commodification, specifically trans-national adoptions, is the topic of two essays by Ann Anagnost and Barbara Yngvesson.

A final theme found in this anthology is the process by which professional women, including midwives, sonographers, and home-birth specialists, negotiate the fine line between their services as a commodity and their commitment to women. An excellent article by Robbie E. Davis-Floyd documents how midwives in the United States struggled to create a professional organization to legitimize their profession to the medical establishment while at the same time avoiding "selling out" to market forces that make commodities of women's bodies. Janelle S. Taylor documents how sonographers, overwhelmingly women, have played a crucial role in fetishizing or objectifying the fetus while attempting to legitimate their profession.

This book would be a rich source of empirical case studies of consumer behavior in western societies for graduate courses and scholars in consumption studies, anthropology, and feminist and gender studies. The organization of the book is such that by assigning just one or two articles, the context that situates the content of the individual contributions may be lost.

On Hollywood: The Place, The Industry, by **Allen J. Scott**. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005. 264 pp. \$39.50 cloth. ISBN: 0-691-11683-0.

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In this original and rich study, based on diverse methodologies and sources, Allen J. Scott implements the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological devices of economic geography to examine the spatial development and economic growth of Hollywood.

The first question the book strives to answer is "why Hollywood?" Namely, why did the motion picture industry concentrate in Hollywood? The popular answers (appropriate weather, diversity of landscape, the relative ease of independent producers to violate patent rights being far from New York and close to the Mexican border, and more) do not satisfy Scott. Although the initial choice of Southern California might be related to some particular attributes of the place, he argues, this choice has a considerable random component as well.

According to Scott's thesis, "small random events can have a critical impact on the eventual spatial configuration of the entire system" (p. 15). His main explanatory principle is that industries have a general tendency to spatial agglomeration. Once the locational coordinates of a certain industrial agglomeration have somehow been established (even if the initial location is a result of random events), the rising local economic system is subject to a self-reinforcing process of growth. After about 1915, argues Scott, Hollywood started to enjoy this self-reinforcing dynamic. This logic is used not only to explain the general emergence of the Hollywood agglomeration, but to explicate the clustering of different sectors like the digital visual effects industry, which the book predicts will intensify its agglomeration in Southern California.

Scott provides a close and detailed probe of the dynamics of diverse units of production and sectors in Hollywood, including soundstages, set designs, and television program production. A special chapter is dedicated to a comprehensive account of the

formation and structure of Hollywood's highly flexible labor market. This flexibility generates much insecurity, and the book analyzes the formations of unions and guilds that attempt to confront this insecurity.

Although in its opening the book promises to situate the discussion in the intersection of culture, economy, and urban geography, the cultural dimension of this triad is somewhat neglected. With the exception of the first chapter and the last two, it seems as if this book could have been written about any industrial agglomeration, not necessarily on the industry of popular culture. Unfortunately, through most of the book, the fact that Hollywood produces meanings, as well as the particular content of its products, seem to have no relevance to the highly elaborate analysis of the spatial setting and economic growth of the film industry in Hollywood.

Toward the end of the book, however, Scott brings culture back and elegantly broadens the scope of discussion. He justly criticizes the rhetoric of market ideology with regard to cultural products and implicitly criticizes the exertion of political pressures by the United States on other countries for freer trade. He reminds the readers that Hollywood has always received abundant help from various agencies of the federal government, for both economic and political considerations. Given the potential implications of popular culture on selfhood and identity, Scott expresses understanding of the motivations of countries that aspire to regulate the importation of American films and actively encourage local production.

The last chapter specifically addresses the controversy of whether Hollywood is a major agent of promoting American cultural hegemony or even cultural imperialism. Albeit cautiously, Scott is sympathetic to those who are concerned about cultural imperialism, but at the same time he provides counterevidence that might ease these concerns. For example, although in monetary terms and in the aspect of export activity Hollywood leads the international film industry by a landslide, in terms of the number of films made, Hollywood is only one of several prominent centers of production, and not the largest among them. Bollywood in Mumbai produces more films than Hollywood, and the Philippines produces more films than the

United States. In addition, out of ten media international conglomerates, only four are originally from the United States. Therefore, the book tries to refute concerns that Hollywood's economic dominance of the film industry is progressively moving the world toward a uniformly American culture. It still warns, however, of a continued control by large media conglomerates over significant segments of cultural production for global markets.

Even though the book claims to appeal to a wide audience, it should be noted that in the way it is written and by its conceptual references, more than two thirds of it is directed mainly toward professional economists and geographers, and less to cultural sociologists or to the general educated audience. Still, even the less reader-friendly parts of the book are highly informative and replete with innovative findings. By any measure, *On Hollywood* is an important and valuable contribution for our understanding of the interdependency of economic processes, spatial dynamics, and popular culture.

Reviewed by
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 Wad, 22 Nov 2004

Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianity, by **R. Marie Griffith**. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004. 323 pp. \$55.00 cloth. ISBN: 0-520-21753-5. \$21.95 paper. ISBN: 0-520-24240-8.

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It is no surprise that in contemporary American society features of our bodies are often assumed to be related to characteristics of our personality, intellect, and competence. Numerous studies have identified links between physical attributes such as height, weight, gender, race and ethnicity and the social, legal, educational, and occupational opportunities and successes that individuals experience. Physical bodies are taken as representations of ability and aptitude and therefore have very real consequences. In *Born Again Bodies*, Griffith traces the roots of such meanings and their effects through the history of Christianity and illuminates how this history influences modern perceptions of and preoccupations with the human body.