

Juha Kindberg: The oldest reel in the archive

This article is about the mystery of the oldest so-called exhibitor's reel that has been in found in Finland. The reel was probably compiled at the turn of the century. It has been assumed that such reels are random compilations, and they have been filed according to filmmakers and genres. In other words, they have been split into separate parts rather than kept in a piece as an example of how films have been exhibited. Could such reels be something more than just mechanical compilations? Could they be seen as purposeful texts - even if it is impossible to crack their code on the original auditive level? It is perfectly feasible, that the film reel discussed here has been edited from short films and fragments so as to function as a meaningful whole to be exhibited. The reception and interpretation of such a compilation have been guided by the rhetorical guidance and sound effects provided by the exhibitor.

The emphasis is on the practices and context of exhibition, which is one of the least researched aspects of early cinema. There are also problems in identifying early film clips and assessing when an early film compilation should be treated as a signifying whole, when as a mere fragmentary collection of diverse materials. This involves taking a stand on the issue of whether early films in such a compilation should be thought of as originals, copies - possibly instances of piracy - or narrational formulas, or adaptations of a genre.

Kimmo Laine Primitivism in the 1920's: *Kiljusen pojat koulussa*

The aim of this article is to consider the development

of Finnish narrative cinema in the 1910's and 1920's. Most Finnish fiction films made before 1920 have been lost, but this short semi-professional comedy from the early 1920's, exhibited originally for school children only, can shed some light on earlier film practices.

Kiljusen pojat koulussa ("The Kiljunen Boys at School"), made in 1921 by author and theatre director Jalmari Finne after his enormously popular children's stories, can be seen as a transitional work bearing marks of a "primitive mode of representation" - to apply Noël Burch's terminology - while it also points to certain aspects of "institutional" film making. On one hand, the emblematic shot opening the film, the horizontal tableau-like shots, recurrent looks into the camera and the fact that the narrative is not self contained and scarcely makes sense without background knowledge, are all features associated with an earlier period of film making. On the other hand the intertitles and point of view -structures of the film are actually more "classical" than in most Finnish studio films of the early 1920's. Thus, a shot to shot study of *Kiljusen pojat koulussa* challenges the idea of a steady linear progression towards classical narration and institutional cinema, as depicted in certain standard film histories.

Harri Kilpi

Melodramatic Images of History: Representation of Social Classes and *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1967)

Retracing the features of heritage cinema to the late 1960s, the paper focuses on John Schlesinger's 1967 adaptation of Thomas Hardy's classic *Far from the Madding Crowd*. The representation of class is specifically emphasised. Key questions

are: what kind of representational strategies are used to bring about images of different classes? what kinds of topographies, clothes and gestures are imposed on characters to cause differences, distinctions and classifications? what kind of ideological consequences do these choices have? Answers to these questions reveal the simplified, pastoral and painterly image of the working class and the more complex one of the middle class, whose representation is saturated with melodrama on the one hand and with Hardy's and Schlesinger's 'radical' views on gender and class borders on the other. Close-readings of contemporary press reviews, particularly the ones concerning Julie Christie's star persona and its impact on the film, shows how short 'the mental distance' between the British 1960s' society and *Far from the Madding Crowd* actually was. This also serves a wider aim of relating the film to the contexts of social history - e.g. the contemporary class climate - and cultural history - e.g. the nostalgia boom of the late 1960s, the budding heritage industry and postmodern historicity of the Jamesonian type.

Mervi Pantti

Film Reviewing in the Era of Net Journalism

New media such as Internet have increased the amount, not only of film reviewing but also of critical debate on reviewing. Reader's columns in journals and periodicals have traditionally functioned as forums for people for expressing their opinions, but this forum has a high threshold and gatekeeper. In the net, on the other hand, every user has the right and the possibility of expressing his/her opinions anonymously without editorial selection. The most positive aspects of

the net, freedom and speed, can be seen as problems from the point of view of sensible debate, but at least in theory information networks enable reciprocal debate, including the possibility of bringing critics and the public closer to each other - very much according to the 1990s ideal of citizen's journalism.

This article participates in the debate on the quality of film reviewing first of all by charting the tasks of film criticism on the basis of the standard literature on this topic. The main issue, however, is to study the quality of film reviewing from the point of view of the expectations of the audience. Although the existence of film criticism is dependent on the readers, the opinions of the so-called "ordinary people" do not appear to carry much weight in the actual practice of film reviewing. Whether readers are satisfied or not is not an important issue, as the traditionally connoisseur and art centred field of reviewing places itself above the audience right from the beginning: the aim is to "guide" and "enlighten", not to "follow" the audience. As Theodor Adorno has suggested, "following" is in conflict with the basic function of reviewing, which is to cultivate the aesthetic taste of the audience.

The aim in this article is to clarify what kind of expectations readers have about film reviews. The readers are discussed here not only as consumers of film reviews but also as competent and critical readers, who have an interest in developing film reviewing. Do the opinions and participation of the readers have any function within a journalistic genre such as film reviewing and should they have any? The empirical material has been gathered from two sources: an enquiry made in the netsite of Helsingin Sanomat and messages on the chat lists of two electronic journals in June-December 2001.