

Letter from the Editor

Dear readers,

This issue of *Cinephile* implores us to consider the little things—the comparably smaller, sometimes ephemeral media texts that orbit the edges of film and television culture. From movie reviews to end credits, ‘making of’ featurettes to fan-created *YouTube* videos, this issue considers those ancillary components that frame and shape our everyday encounters with screen media.

Published during a global shutdown of movie theatres due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of *Cinephile* 14.1 has adopted an eerie timeliness. As our external lives have contracted, our appreciation for that which is often denigrated as subsidiary—or supplementary—has sharpened. Small moments and gestures procure a sudden gravity as souvenirs of securer, social times. Confined to our homes, we yearn for the comfort of contact, of settling down in the dark with strangers in anticipation of the latest film. While the collective theatrical experience is momentarily paused, audiences are resilient, finding avenues to connect through many of the paratextual practices and materials considered in these pages. In *Cinephile* 14.1, you will read essays that consider the multiple mediators that shape not just our relationships to cinematic stories, but to each other.

Opening this issue, Suzanne Scott’s preface considers the powerful intimacy between audiences and paratexts—or, as she writes, para/texts. Contemplating this slash as a politically charged space, Scott affirms the need for critical inquiry into para/texts as the nexus of negotiations between audiences and industry. Our first article comes from Emily Saidel, who traces feminist possibilities in the narrative fringes with her analysis of title cards and end credits in *Jane the Virgin* (2014-2019) and *Fleabag* (2016-2019). Saidel also pushes us to consider how industrial shifts such as streaming and binge-watching continue to devalue these liminal spaces. Next, Troy Michael Bordun casts a penetrating eye on the state of online film criticism in his reception study of *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2015). Tracking reviews that ultimately label *Fifty Shades of Grey* a ‘woman’s film’, Bordun considers the consequences of contemporary criticism’s reliance on genre classification as a favoured analytical tool. Writing on Watchmojo’s now ubiquitous ‘Top 10’ *YouTube* videos, Joceline Andersen demystifies the mega content creator’s success by pointing to its

strategy of appropriating bootleg aesthetics while adhering to the stipulations of rightsholders. Following this, Zachary Sheldon brings a nostalgic turn back to DVD paratexts. Drawing on the ‘making of’ featurettes accompanying *Star Wars* films, Sheldon expands auteurist theory to detail a new rhetoric of authorship, examining how the digital’s reorganization of labour and production is propagated through paratextual materials. Another expansive media franchise, the *Alien* universe, is the subject of John Quinn’s essay. Writing specifically on fan-created ‘explained’ or ‘lore’ videos shared on *YouTube*, Quinn considers how online platforms hybridize with paratexts to extend narrative engagement and consumer experiences. Lastly, our issue closes with a roundtable between Keith M. Johnston, Jesse Balzer, and Erin Pearson. Interrogating the hierarchical implications of a paratext-lens in promotional media analysis, their discussion invites us to leave these pages with a renewed interest in what lies around the corner of this paratextual turn.

Just as we cannot view a film or television series as an isolated unit, *Cinephile* 14.1 is not complete without commending the many individuals who were instrumental to the fruition of this issue. I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to the talented scholars whose thoughtful words and inquisitive ideas fill these pages. Your rigorous research and astounding dedication during this uncertain time is appreciated beyond measure. To the editorial board, thank you for your boundless enthusiasm and devotion to detail, to put it plainly: this issue would not exist without you. To my dear friend and graphic designer for this issue, Lisa Escudero, thank you for lending us your unparalleled eye. And finally, to the faculty and staff at UBC’s Department of Theatre and Film who guide us through it all: Christine Evans, Lisa Coulthard, Brian McIlroy, Cameron Cronin, Karen Tong, and those who have read *Cinephile* over the years. Thank you for being part of this wondrous adventure.

Sincerely,
Jemma Dashkewytch
Editor-in-Chief, 2019-2020