

(Ebook pdf) It's So French!: Hollywood, Paris, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture

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Vanessa R. Schwartz

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Vanessa R. Schwartz : It's So French!: Hollywood, Paris, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised It's So French!: Hollywood, Paris, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Buy this book! By karolinaexcellent reference book. I first borrowed it from the library, then HAD to have it. anyone that is serious about knowing about that specific time in the last century when french cinema exploded- THIS is a must have!!! Not just as a pop culture history book, but as a socio-political point of reference for Postwar France. 22 of 28 people found the following review helpful. a good book but... By Edward Schwartz's It's So French presents original research on a vital topic, and the book is very attractively illustrated. However, I regret to say that this is the most poorly edited serious academic book I have ever read. Here are just a few examples of the many errors or misspellings: Mary Cassat (for Cassatt), Martine Carole (for Carol), Grard

Philippe (for Philipe), Edwige Feuillire (for Feuillre), Jean-Henri Clouzot (for Henri-Georges Clouzot), Edward Dymtryk (for Dmytryk), Wolfe Mankowitz (for Wolf), Siegfried Kracauer (for Kracauer), Antonie de Baecque (for Antoine), Jean Domachi (for Domarchi), Ginette Vincendeau (for Ginette), Akira Friye (for Iriye), John Tomlison (for Tomlinson), Barbara Wilinsky (for Wilinsky), Richard Matby (for Maltby), Moritz de Hdealn (for Hadeln), Berghann Books (for Berghahn), Paparazi (for Paparazzi), Ntre Dame (for Notre Dame), Arc du Carousel (for Carrousel), Lutton (for Luton), Du Rififi chez les homes (for hommes), Les enfants du paradise (for paradis), Les orgueilleaux (for orgueilleux)... and so on. It must be particularly galling for so gallophile an author to discover so many misspelt French names in her book. Much of this could be blamed on the poor copy-editing: the University of Chicago Press clearly did not hire someone who knew French or anything about film theory to do that job... in fact the frequent errors of punctuation, syntax and bibliographical form suggest they didn't hire a copy-editor at all. Schwartz thanks the editors at the press for accepting a book that would be 'expensive to publish': I doubt if she is thanking them now. That said, only she can be blamed for the several errors of fact in the book, for example: *La symphonie pastorale* is a film about a pastor in Switzerland, not a 'French Resistance movie'; *Le ballon rouge* is set and filmed in Mnilmontant, not Montmartre; in the famous dance sequence of *Et Dieu cra ... la femme*, Bardot dances to a Cuban mambo, not a Brazilian samba, and the musicians in question are Mexican, not 'clearly Afro-Brazilians'. On this last point Schwartz denigrates scholars 'who have referred to the musicians as African'. Such hubris is what has prompted me to list in this review a few of the book's countless defects. I can only hope that the author and editors will read this review before embarking on a second edition.

4 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A Book for Francophiles and All Who Love Movies

By Lisa Adams

This is a breathtaking book that completely upends everything that I thought I knew about Americanization and globalization, the French New Wave, cultural cliches and so much more. *It's So French* shows -- in a lively and very compelling way -- how a partnership between Paris and Hollywood laid the foundations of post-war global culture. Schwartz is a great story-teller, and has dug up amazing stuff on Cannes, art-house theaters, and Bardot in America. A brilliant book that will make you think differently about everything from post-war cinema to Freedom fries!

The recent history of cultural exchange between France and the United States would appear to be defined by freedom fries and boycotts against Beaujolais, on the other side of the Atlantic, by enraged farmers toppling statues of Ronald McDonald. But this dismal state of affairs is a long way from the mutual admiration that followed World War II, epitomized in a 1958 cover of *Look* magazine that declared Brigitte Bardot conquers America. *It's So French!* explores the close affinity between the French and American film industries that flourished in the postwar years, breaking down myths of American imperialism and French cultural protectionism while illuminating the vital role that cinema has played in the globalization of culture. Hollywood was once enamored with everything French and this infatuation blossomed in a wildly popular series of films including *An American in Paris*, *Gigi*, and *Funny Face*. Schwartz here examines the visual appeal of such films, and then broadens her analysis to explore their production and distribution, probing the profitable influences that Hollywood and Paris exerted on each other. This exchange moved beyond individual films with the sensational spectacle of the Cannes Film Festival and the meteoric career of Brigitte Bardot. And in turn, their success led to a new kind of film that celebrated internationalism and cultural hybridity. Ultimately, Schwartz uncovers an intriguing paradox: that the road to globalization was paved with nationalist cliches, and thus, films beloved for being so French were in fact the first signs of a nascent cosmopolitan culture. Packed with an array of colorful film stills, publicity photographs, paparazzi shots, ads, and never before seen archival images, *It's So French!* is an incisive account of the fertile collaboration between France and the United States that expanded the geographic horizons of both filmmaking and filmgoing, forever changing what the world saw and dreamed of when they went to the movies.

From *Publishers Weekly* Schwartz (*Spectacular Realities*) makes a sociological analysis of the interplay between French iconography and the American film industry. Mostly, she looks at the influence of French culture, from the belle époque till today, on American movies such as *Gigi*, *An American in Paris* and *Moulin Rouge*. She notes the huge influence of the Cannes Film Festival, which serves as the major locus of global distribution, effectively de-centering Hollywood as the sole power broker. Finally, she zeroes in on the career of Brigitte Bardot as a quintessential image of 1960s France, an actress who seized attention by trumpeting sexuality. Ironically, what you won't find is any real discussion of French filmmakers, such as Truffaut and Godard. The latter is dismissed as too intellectual and his appeal short-lived; hence, the directors' significant influence on contemporary American filmmakers is ignored. Instead, the USC professor cites Mike Todd's *Around the World in Eighty Days* as an example of the globalization of filmmaking, specifically highlighting location shooting as the imperative for big-budget movies. Schwartz is passionate about the subject, but her writing can be dense; its primary audience is academia. (Jan.)

Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Hers is no sterile school-book approach. . . . Schwartz's well-researched book expertly documents this profound event in the development of

cosmopolitan film culture as we know it today. Recommended.