

Off-White Hollywood: American Culture and Ethnic Female Stardom

By Diane Negra

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Off-White Hollywood investigates how the 'ethnicity' of white European-American actresses has played a key role in the mythology of American identity and nation building. Negra focuses on key stars of the silent - Colleen Moore and Pola Negri - classical - Sonja Henie and Hedy Lamarr - and post-classical eras - Marisa Tomei and Cher - to demonstrate how each star illuminates aspects of ethnicity, gender, consumerism, and class at work in American culture.

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Editorial Review

Review
"A unique examination of celebrity culture as the place where white American national identities are contested and consolidated. Integrating social and cultural history with close readings of films, Negra shows how "ethnicity" has been commodified or adapted to add what she calls an 'enriching vague flavor of difference' to American identity. Her definitive analysis of these stars offers valuable insights into Hollywood's production of US femininity in a global frame."
-Patricia White, Swarthmore College
"Diana Negra's smart, savvy, imaginative exploration brings to the surface cultural changes - from the turn of the 20th century to the present - in the invisible racial and ethnic assumptions that underlie the allure of filmic glamour and sex appeal.Perhaps Negra's most startling effect is to break the silence with which the culture industry typically embalms stars who once seemed to rule Hollywood but were ultimately casually discarded by a system that regards women as commodities, ethnicity as artificial flavoring, and whiteness as a norm."
-Martha P. Nochimson, Mercy College
"Negra's six case studies provide a brilliant demonstration of how Hollywood uses the ethnicity of white US actresses to support its myths of assimilation. Negra (Univ. of North Texas) supports her strong film analyses with evidence from social history, popular culture newspaper gossip, fanzines, and publicity material. ... Recommended for upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.."
-M. Yacowar, University of Calgary in CHOICE, June 2002
"An undoubtedly important book. With its analysis of the historical transformation in the cultural understanding of gender andethnicity in film," Off-White Hollywood fills a gap in both whiteness studies and cinema studies. Negra is to be congratulated!."
-Jon Stratton, Curtin University of Technology
"Negra's six case studies provide a brilliant demontration of how Hollywood uses the ethnicity of white US actresses to support myths of assimilation. Negra (University of North Texas) supports her strong film analyses with evidence from social history, popular culture, newspaper gossip, fanzines, and publicity material...Recommended for upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals." Choice June 2002."

About the Author
Diane Negra is Assistant Professor in the Department of Radio, TV and Film at the University of North Texas. She is the co-editor of *A Feminist Reader in Early Cinema* (Duke University Press 2002).

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