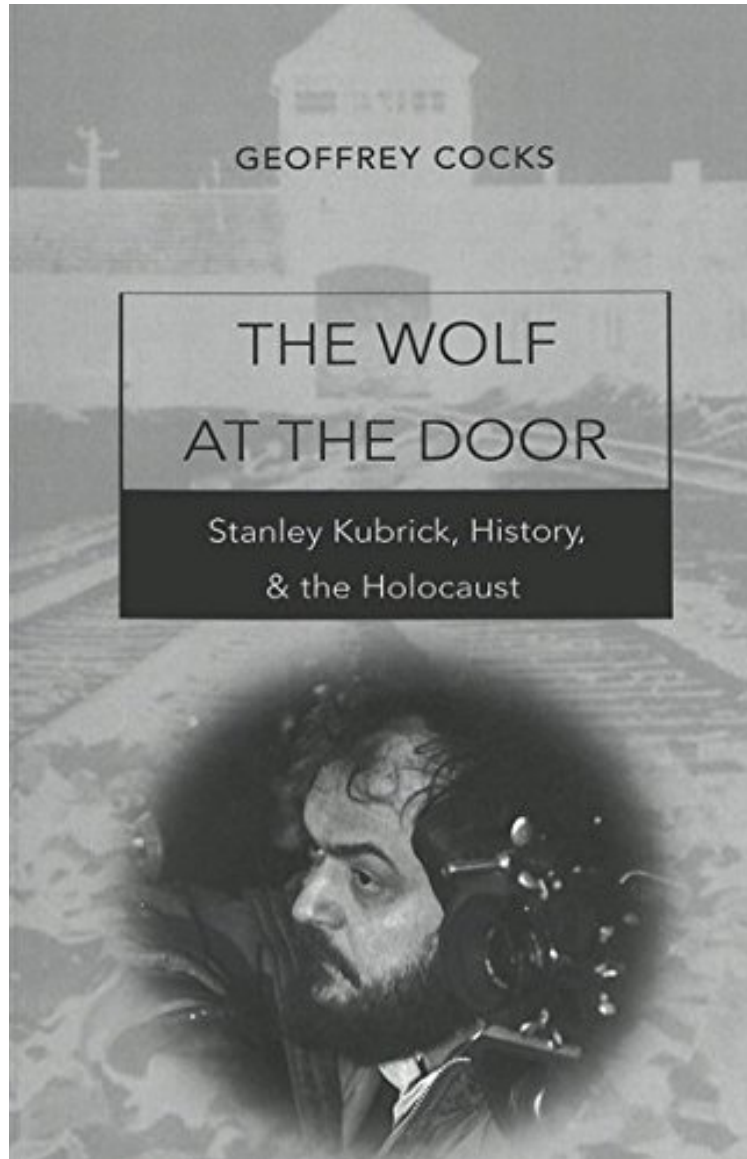


The Wolf at the Door: Stanley Kubrick, History, and the Holocaust

Geoffrey Cocks

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Geoffrey Cocks : The Wolf at the Door: Stanley Kubrick, History, and the Holocaust before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wolf at the Door: Stanley Kubrick, History, and the Holocaust:

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful. subjective, over the top analysis By Mark bennett In this book the author attempts to read in themes into the works of Stanley Kubrick by ignoring the literal and instead focusing almost exclusively on the unconscious. We are told that the films of Kubrick should be seen as a philosophical response to the

holocaust. And that the film "The Shining" should be seen as Kubrick's great holocaust film. To say that the book reaches to prove these claims is an extreme understatement. To the degree that the book works at all, it works because of Kubrick's steady refusal to talk in depth about his own work over his career. The void created by Kubrick becomes in essence a blank slate upon which the author can put nearly anything. By the end of the book, I was left with the impression that its ideas have their roots with the author rather than Kubrick. There is also a tendency by the author to deliver conclusions that are at odds with the literal facts. Kubrick's background is important because it was not important to Kubrick. The absence of certain character types in his films implies that those character types were of significance to him. The absence of things is taken as being evidence from which conclusions can be drawn. The worst example of this is the mental gymnastics the author engages in to dismiss the facts associated with Kubrick's attempt to make his own holocaust film and how his attempt came to an end because of the release of Schindler's List. When the facts don't suit his conclusions, he dismisses the facts in favor of his literary deconstruction and biographical analysis. His analysis of the Shining is off the deep end. He generally ignores the fact that the basics of the film say more about Stephen King's obsessions than those of Kubrick. He turns the old saw of the "indian graveyard" into a holocaust reference. The native american themes are in The Shining and are Kubrick's contribution. But they don't seem to near as far as the author would suggest. He is correct in observing that Kubrick had little interest in the supernatural elements of the Shining. But what he misses is that Kubrick's major change to the work is to redirect it away from the supernatural basis of the original material into a work more about the evil and danger of individuals. He turns the Shining from a supernatural horror story into a secular psychological horror story. By the end, he is telling us that typewriters in a film represent the SS in the context of the holocaust. He goes too far. As a sort of surreal exercise, all of this analysis can be amusing, but not ultimately meaningful. The book contains a large amount of small detail on the film which can itself be interesting. But as history, the author and his ideas fail to convince.

0 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Dr. Cocks' Rocks on Kubrick By Phillip Gary Smith Dr. Geoffrey Cocks is a professor/writer who has dug deeply in the caves of the Stanley Kubrick mountain of material to discover and reveal the intensely deeper meanings of those films known simply as "Kubrick Movies." His view of things are presented in this engaging title that will capture interest whether or not you have interest in the Holocaust. Dr. Cocks said, "I have always believed that knowledge of history is essential for compassionate and effective engagement in the world." That one can find pieces of that knowledge in films by "The Man," as Jack Nicholson calls Kubrick, and have them dissected, interpreted, and revealed through this volume is, for a reader, amazing. The book seems like the best history value one can ever expect to find.

6 of 16 people found the following review helpful. I was a skeptic... By David Wheatley until I took his class - now this book goes further into a connection that you will continue to think about everytime you watch Kubrick's movies. Read it... watch the movies again ... then read the book... it has literally changed the way I view movies!

The Wolf at the Door explores the remarkable formal and substantive patterns of cinematic discourse on Germany and the Holocaust in Stanley Kubrick's films. It is the first book on Kubrick to place his cinema into the full context of his life and times: his Jewish past, early years spent under the shadows of fascism and war, and his 1957 marriage into a German family of artists and filmmakers all provoked his deeply ambivalent preoccupation with the history of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. While personal and artistic reservations caused Kubrick to abandon several plans for a film on the Holocaust, this preoccupation combined with related cultural discourses in the 1970s, and culminated in a curiously indirect but compelling Holocaust subtext in his 1980 horror film, *The Shining*. *The Wolf at the Door* draws on intensive study of all of Kubrick's films, interviews with members of Kubrick's immediate family, and archival research in the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, and Israel.

In *The Wolf at the Door: Stanley Kubrick, History and the Holocaust* Geoffrey Cocks has accomplished what had seemed impossible to inhabit the inner-life of the great, and highly secretive film director. What Cocks finds in the subconscious mind behind the films are meditations on War, the Holocaust and the real and secret history of the world explored through Kubrick's iconoclastic world view. *The Wolf at the Door* applies an astute understanding of geopolitics and psychology to the detailed facts of Kubrick's earthly existence; the results bring insight into this mysterious twentieth century cinematic icon. (Vincent LoBrutto, author of *Stanley Kubrick: A Biography*)

About the Author: Geoffrey Cocks is Julian S. Rammelkamp Professor of History at Albion College in Michigan. A graduate of Occidental College, Los Angeles, California, he earned his Ph.D. in history at UCLA in 1975. He is the author of *Psychotherapy in the Third Reich: The Goring Institute and Treating Mind and Body*; editor of *The Curve of Life: Correspondence of Heinz Kohut*; and co-editor of *Psycho/History: German Professions, 1800-1950; Medicine and Modernity*; and *Depth of Field: Stanley Kubrick, Film, and the Uses of History*.