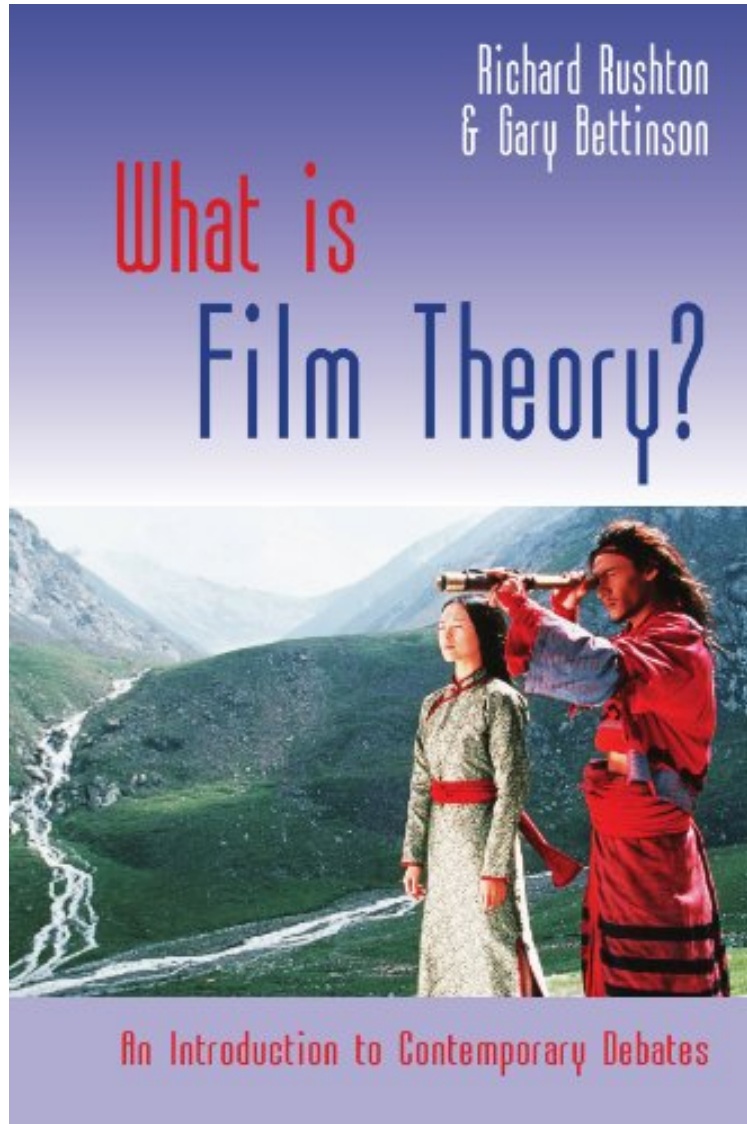


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What is Film Theory?

Richard Rushton, Gary Bettinson

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"... authoritative, always engaged, and grounded in the detailed study of well chosen films. This is an exceptionally useful introduction, and good to read." Professor James Donald, The University of New South Wales, Australia This engaging and accessible book explores major debates in contemporary film theory, providing a detailed introduction to the central arguments advanced by film theorists since the 1960s. *What is Film Theory?* outlines the discipline's key theoretical concepts, perspectives, and traditions, and critically examines the assertions posited by exemplary film theorists and philosophers of film. A step-by-step approach to these issues guides the reader through the central topics of film theory. Beginning with a discussion of structuralism and semiotics, and moving through debates on psychoanalysis, feminism, Screen theory, and cultural studies, the authors then examine the perspectives of 'post-theory', cognitivism, and historical poetics, as well as recent developments such as audience research and the 'cinema of attractions'. Analysis of the major theories is supported with detailed and wide-ranging case studies of particular films, including *Singin' in the Rain*, *The Searchers*, *Tout va bien*, *Jaws*, *Do the Right Thing*, *Brokeback Mountain*, and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. These case studies are accompanied by a series of illustrative film and production stills. *What is Film Theory?* is indispensable reading for all students of Film and Media Studies, as well as for general readers interested in the debates which have defined film theory.

About the Author Richard Rushton and Gary Bettinson are both Lecturers in the Department of Media, Film and Cultural Studies, Lancaster University, UK.