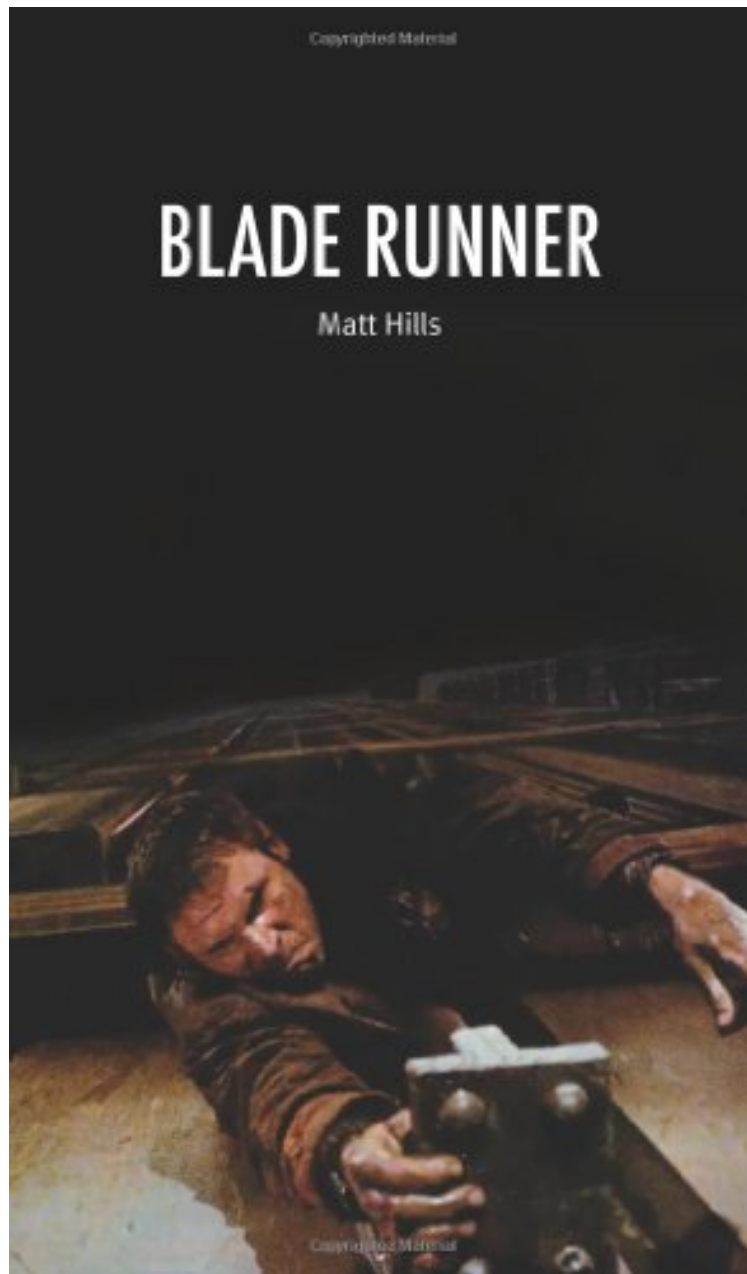


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Matt Hills, Sean Redmond

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#866656 in Books 2011-12-13Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 6.80 x .40 x 4.30l, .25 #File Name:
1906660336128 pages | File size: 49.Mb

Matt Hills, Sean Redmond : Blade Runner (Cultographies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Blade Runner (Cultographies):

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Not for the average fan or really anyone. By John Colaresi
In one of Gore Vidal's essays he talks about how there are two kinds of novels: The P-Novel and the U-Novel. The first one is written for the public (P) or the average reader; the second one is written by university (U) professors who write to impress each other with word games and arcane references. Some film books like this one by Matt Hills are written like U-Novels where their authors also overload the reader with a preponderance of almost undecipherable quotes from books that over-analyze their subject and are known only to the inhabitants of academic ivory towers and not to the average reader. For a short book consisting of 128 pages, I found parts of it unreadable for those reasons. The Editorial reviewer warned us by saying how "readers may be scratching their heads a bit too often." That sure is an understatement! Actually the description copied from the book's back cover makes more sense than reading the rest of this book. The definition of a cult film has changed since Danny Peary issued three engrossing volumes about films that have grown in stature since their humble beginnings and troubled production histories. The author cites three different cults surrounding this film but you don't need to read about them in unfathomable depth here as different cultists or fans like 'Blade Runner' for different reasons and it was their combined unflinching interest that led to midnight theater and cable TV showings and new versions on home video which gave it a new life since its initial failure in theaters. The film's later success spawned a lot of articles and books you'll find listed in the extensive Bibliography which is the best part of this book. However if you don't like books flatulent with words such as 'meta-artifact' 'extra-textual' 'test-cluster' 'neutrosemic' 'polysemic' and others which you'll need a dictionary to figure out what the hell the author means, then this book is not for you or as it wasn't for me. Film critic Armond White would probably refer to this book as the outcome of "academic studies where abstruse, tenure-seeking jargon is used to rebuff popular taste." BTW 'neutrosemic' doesn't appear in two online dictionaries so good luck there. Then there are impenetrable sentences like: "In Philippe Le Guern's (2004) constructivist terms, there would seem to be no discourse of cult at play in these academic interpretations: after all, the concept is not directly used, even if David Harvey gestures towards it. However, via postmodern theory these academics reinforce cultifying discourses circulating subculturally in 'Blade Runner's' author/auteur cults. Brooker and Brooker ponder whether 'perhaps postmodernism is especially productive of cult texts... [given that] the enduring... 'Blade Runner'... remains the sine qua non of post modern cinema'(197:56) But I would argue that the apparent confluence of 'postmodern' and 'cult' texts is only half-conceptualised if we remain at the level of identifying textual qualities (genre hybridity/excess/massive/intertextuality/immersive hyperdiegesis)." Huh??? OK folks, can you tell me what all that paragraph meant as I'm clueless? I think I might know but that's from re-reading it several times as I did with other sections, translating Latin, and learning about these cited writers. This verbose sludge was taken from page 105 and mercifully there were only another 7 pages of text to plow through. Not to brag but I hold a BS and MA in English and own about 300 books on film theater so I think I know something about these terms and I'm a big fan of the film but I admit defeat as I lost interest in this book and finished it as a chore. Unless you took a recent college course about these terms and where you were subjected to deep stuff like Baudrillardian cultural theory which is unknown to me, good luck again. I'm sure you're asking who is this guy Baudrillard but don't ask me. According to Wikipedia's large section on him he's a French cultural theorist and philosopher who died in 2007. Highly regarded in Europe and unless you took a philosophy class, most people here have never heard of him or more likely understood what he wrote except for the author who wants to add more to his name dropping. Try reading his Wiki page if you can follow it. If you think my aim is to belittle academics and French thinkers, read Vidal's essays about French and American modern literary theories as he tries to make sense of them. Anyway this book is not a pleasurable read; it's homework for a Ph.D. candidate. It's been over 40 years since I've taken a college course. Jeez is this hifalutin gobbledegook what's being taught now? The average 'Blade Runner' fan should stay clear of this book as it doesn't tell you anything new or anything else what you really need to know. I'm grateful I didn't pay full price for this headache-inducing opus. In the book's opening Acknowledgements, the author, whose other film books are unknown to me and I hope easier to read, mentions he's "still in the market for a 2019 Johnny Walker bottle," a prop from the film. At this point drinking scotch from any kind of bottle would help in digesting this quasi-pseudointellectual offal. (OK I'm also guilty of using big words but if you can figure out what I just said, you might be able to understand this book.) I do love scotch and if you do too, go spend your money on a good brand instead of wasting it on this unrewarding (for me) book. I wish I did.

More than just a box office flop that resurrected itself in the midnight movie circuit, Blade Runner (1982) achieved extraordinary cult status through video, laserdisc, and a five-disc DVD collector's set. Blade Runner has become a network of variant texts and fan speculations a franchise created around just one film. Some have dubbed the movie "classroom cult" for its participation in academic debates, while others have termed it "meta-cult," in line with the work of Umberto Eco. The film has also been called "design cult," thanks to Ridley Scott's brilliant creation of a Los Angeles in 2019, the graphics and props of which have been recreated by devoted fans. Blade Runner tests the limits of this authenticity and artificiality, challenging the reader to differentiate between classic and flop, margin and mainstream, true cult and its replicants.

A fascinating look at why Blade Runner has become a cornerstone of modern cinema, but readers may be scratching their heads a bit too often. (Jamais Jochim San Francisco Book)About the AuthorMatt Hills is reader in media and cultural studies at Cardiff University and the author of Fan Cultures, The Pleasures of Horror, and Triumph of a Time Lord: Regenerating Doctor Who in the Twenty-first Century.