

**HOLLYWOOD DREAMING:  
SATIRES OF HOLLYWOOD 1930-2003**

Thesis submitted by

Greg Jericho, B.Ec. (Hons) *Flinders*, Grad. Dip. Arts (Distinction) *James Cook*

in October 2004

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in the School of Humanities

Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences

James Cook University

For Lara

## STATEMENT OF ACCESS

I, the undersigned, the author of this thesis, understand that James Cook University will make it available for use within the University Library and, via the Australian Digital Theses network, for use elsewhere.

I understand that, as an unpublished work, a thesis has significant protection under the Copyright Act.

All users consulting this thesis will have to sign the following statement:

In consulting this thesis, I agree not to copy or closely paraphrase it in whole or in part without the written consent of the author; and to make proper public written acknowledgment for any assistance which I have obtained from it.

Beyond this, I do not place any restriction on access to this thesis

.....

Greg Jericho

.....

Date

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines film and literary satires of Hollywood 1930 – 2003 and asserts that such satires are attacks on the Hollywood Dream. The study reveals that these satires focus on two common themes: the artificiality of Hollywood, and the amoral and corruptive nature of Hollywood.

The study examines the depiction of the Hollywood Dream within satires of the industry and demonstrates its increasing importance in American culture. The similarity of themes in film and literary satires highlights an interesting dialogue between the two modes which has not been thoroughly investigated. Although satirists' approaches towards the artificiality of Hollywood vary greatly, the most significant treatment of the theme in both literary and film satires is one which gains much understanding through use of Jean Baudrillard's theory of simulacra and simulation.

My examination also investigates the tendency of characters within satires of Hollywood to discard previous identities and create in their place a Hollywood identity. Such an identity is linked to the artificiality of Hollywood and is displayed by satirists as a prerequisite for one wishing to achieve the Hollywood Dream.

While there have been numerous studies on novels on the Hollywood industry and its films, this study is unique in examining both literary and film satires of Hollywood together, and covering such an extended period of time. It hopes to show that satires of Hollywood have reached a critical juncture. The satire of many recent works has become moribund due to the public's awareness of and apathetic attitude towards the amorality and hypocrisy of Hollywood, and because these satires fail to acknowledge the intrinsic artificiality of Hollywood.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr Stephen Tore and Professor Peter Pierce, for their time, constant encouragement and advice. They conscientiously read my draft manuscripts and made numerous editorial suggestions to help sharpen my thesis argument. Their friendship and support over the past five years has been invaluable, and it must be said that were it not for their guidance this thesis would not have been written. I would also like to thank Dr Richard Lansdown, Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities, James Cook University (JCU), Cairns. His advice in the early stages of my research was invaluable in the choosing of my area of research. I also wish to thank the faculty and postgraduate students of the JCU School of Humanities for their advice and comments following my exit seminar, which helped me clarify some aspects of the structure and argument of the thesis. I am also grateful to JCU for the completion scholarship grant which considerably eased the financial burden during the final stages of the research.

Finally, my greatest thanks go to my wife Gaynor. She helped proof read the manuscript, and without her love, encouragement and reassurance not only would this thesis not have been written, it would not have even been attempted.

# CONTENTS

<b>Statement of Access</b>	iii
<b>Abstract</b>	iv
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	v
<b>Statement of sources</b>	vii
<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>1. All that Glisters is not Gold: Satires of the Golden Years of Hollywood</b>	<b>17</b>
1.1 Hollywood as Hell: <i>The Day of the Locust</i> and <i>Barton Fink</i>	20
1.2 F. Scott Fitzgerald and Budd Schulberg	40
<b>2. The Stuff that Dreams are Made of: The Hollywood Identity and Crime</b>	
<b>Fiction in Hollywood</b>	<b>63</b>
2.1 The Conscious Identity: <i>The Little Sister</i>	65
2.2 The Subconscious Identity: <i>Get Shorty</i>	88
2.3 The Complete Identity: <i>The Player</i>	97
<b>3. Hollywood Simulacra</b>	<b>110</b>
3.1 <i>Myra Breckinridge</i> and <i>Myron</i>	121
3.2 <i>Sunset Blvd</i>	132
3.3 <i>The Truman Show</i>	141
3.4 <i>Mulholland Dr.</i>	160
<b>4. Intertextual Hollywood: Parody, Pastiche and Satire</b>	<b>175</b>
4.1 Intertextual Parody: Spoofs	184
4.2 Intertextual Satire: Robert Altman's <i>The Player</i>	195
4.3 <i>The Simpsons</i>	207
<b>5. Everything Old is New Again: Recent Satires of Hollywood</b>	<b>229</b>
5.1 <i>Slm0ne</i> and <i>Hollywood Cemetery</i>	231
5.2 Corrupt Artists: <i>On Spec</i> , <i>Bowfinger</i> , <i>The Big Picture</i>	243
5.3 <i>I'm Losing You</i> , <i>Still Holding</i>	249
5.4 Corrupt but Nice: <i>State and Main</i>	260
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>271</b>
<b>Films Cited</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>Works Cited</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>Works Consulted</b>	<b>307</b>

# STATEMENT OF SOURCES

## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

.....

Greg Jericho

.....

Date