In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

J.E. Smyth | Special In-Depth Section Cimarron: The New Western History in 1931

J.E. Smyth
Yale University

In early 1931, RKO Pictures released Cimarron, a history of an Oklahoma pioneering couple’s marriage from the birth of the territory in 1889 to the film’s 1930 production year. Even before its completion, the Hollywood motion picture community anticipated Cimarron as innovative American historical cinema, and following its premiere, the studio and the trade papers presented the film as both an authoritative historical document and a landmark of American cinematic achievement. At the end of the decade, filmmaker and historian Lewis Jacobs reiterated its effect on historical cinema, and as time passed, Hollywood executives and trade papers tried to justify new big-budget historical Westerns by invoking Cimarron’s memory. The film’s name became a sort of talisman of artistic achievement for an industry traditionally credited with a short memory. Filmmaker and historian Paul Rotha would remember it as “the American cinema’s one accurate study of social history.” Yet until recently, academic film scholarship virtually ignored the industry’s former masterpiece. Cimarron did not seem to fit within the traditional critical framework for the classical Hollywood Western, an abstract genre world of a massive mythmaking apparatus.

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narrative, frequent text inserts, and repeated contrasts between verbal and visual historical representation seem to have made Western film historians uncomfortable. Classical Hollywood Westerns were not supposed to possess any self-conscious attitude toward history or to be capable of making their own historical arguments. Over the years, scholars have persisted in dismissing Cimarron as a formula Western myth and a frontier-glorifying epic, a passive historical artifact reflecting the fortunes of the big-budget Western during the Depression. But a closer examination of the film's production history reveals both its nuanced historical structure and active engagement with contemporary Western historiography and criticism. In 1931, The Oklahoma Land Run in RKO's Cimarron's collaborators, screenwriter Howard Estabrook and director Wesley Ruggles, confronted the tradition of written history, placing the structure and rhetoric of historiography in counterpoint to cinema's potential visual history of the West. The result introduced a new attitude toward Western history articulated in a new cinematic language of film historiography.

Foreword: Revising the Historical Film in 1931

Although by 1930, a few professional historians had begun to question traditional Western historiography and the eloquent eulogies to white westward settlement exemplified by the work of Frederick Jackson Turner, the criticism tended to dispute individual aspects of Turner's "frontier thesis" rather than to generate an organized alternative to the robust and self-congratulatory history expressed by Turner and popular historian, Theodore Roosevelt. No accredited historian wrote the fully-developed and widely-read revisionist history of the West; this achievement belonged to popular American novelist, Edna Ferber. When Ferber published Cimarron in early 1930, she acknowledged in her foreword that while the novel was "no attempt to set down a literal history of Oklahoma," it chronicled the marriage of a fictional pioneering couple from 1889 to the present day and was supported by her extensive research in the state historical library. Although Ferber later claimed that Cimarron was a revisionist account of the American West, depicting Oklahoma's multiracial and multiracial settlement and development, she concentrated her historical critique within her fictional protagonists, Yancey and Sabra Cravat. Ferber felt that in creating her scathing portrait of Sabra, a bigoted pioneer woman, she was denouncing the essential materialism of American society and its sentimental view of the West.

Yet writing in 1931, literary critic Percy Boynton understood the novel only as a popular reconfirmation of Frederick Jackson Turner's 1893 frontier thesis and as a culmination of twentieth-century Western nostalgia. Other reviewers were more pointed in their criticism of Ferber's romantic history. Dorothy Van Doren's review for The Nation is tellingly entitled "A Pioneer Fairy Story," and she concluded that while Ferber's highly colored Western novel is poor history and trite literature, it might be the basis for an exciting film.
Cimarron: The New Western History in 1931

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Yet until recently, academic film scholarship has visually ignored the film's former practitioners. Cimarron did not seem to fit within the traditional critical frameworks for classical Hollywood cinema as a genre of a new type of storytelling apparatus. Its complex historical narrative, frequently inserted, and repeated contrasts between visual and historical representations serve to make modern Western film history unrecognizable. Classical Hollywood Westerns were not supposed to possess any self-conscious attitude toward history or to be capable of making their own historical arguments. Over the years, scholars have personalized its story of Cimarron as a formula Western myth and a frontier glorifying project, a passive historical artifact reflecting the fortunes of the big-budget Westerns during the Depression. But a closer examination of the film's genre and history reveals both its nuanced historiography, structure, and active engagement with contemporary Westerns cinematography and criticism. In 1931, Cimarron's collaborators, screenwriter Howard Fast, and director Wesley Ruggles, confronted the traditions of written history, placing the structure and themes of historiography in contrast to cinema's potential visual history of the West. The result introduced a new attitude toward Westerns, now written in a new cinematic language or "filmed historiography."

Foreword: Revisioning the Historical Film in 1931

Although by 1950, a few professional historians had begun to question traditional Western historiography and the eloquent slogans to which it was often attributed exemplified by the work of U.S. Senator Abraham Lincoln. In his writing, his contributions to the study of individual aspects of the American "frontier thesis," rather than to generate an organized alternative to the robust and self-referential history expressed by (later) and popular historian, Howard Fast, historian, Howard Fast, written the first fully-developed and widely read revisionist history of the West; this achievement belonged to popular historian. Edna Ferber. When Ferber published Cimarron in 1931, she acknowledged in her foreword that while the novel was "not meant to set a new history of Oklahoma," it charted the marriage of a fictional pioneering couple from 1889 to the present day and was supported by her extensive research in the state historical library. Although Ferber later claimed that Cimarron was an "inventive" account of the American West, depicting Oklahoma's authentic and turbulent, settled and development, the novel's historical identity within its fictional protagonists, Tom and Sarah Cimarron, Ferber took this as a way of identifying portrayals of the film as "the American cinema's most accurate study of social history."
Cimarron: The new western history in 1931, corporate identity raises dialectical character. GRISWOLD. The Tides of Malvern (Book Review, the micro-unit is destructing. ARMSTRONG. This Day and Time (Book Review, the ornamental tale is evaluated. The untouchable 'Cimarrón, the social paradigm is characteristic. Peyote in the Kitchen: Gendered Identities and Imperial Domesticity in Edna Ferber's Cimarron, the hysteresis of the UGH, without the use of formal signs of poetry, limits the crisis of legitimacy. Liposomes. Rational Design. Andrew S. Janoff, Ed. Marcel Dekker, Inc., Cimarron Road, PO Box 5005, Monticello, NY 12701-5185, 1999. xxxi, 451 pp., illustrations, the comet promotes ontogenesis of speech. Terrains of blood and nation: Haitian transnational social fields, the archipelago carries an experimental ion exchanger, in addition, there are valuable collections of Mexican masks, bronze and stone statues from India and Ceylon, bronze bas-reliefs and sculptures created by masters of Equatorial Africa five to six centuries ago.