good effect: his extended analysis of the novel’s entropy-versus-order theme effectively ties Crane’s efforts to those of postmodern writers like Thomas Pynchon. By interspersing helpful summaries of contemporary and current critical response throughout his argument, Hayes confirms that the novella’s complexity more than warrants its recent critical celebrity.

On the whole, what Hayes’s chapters lack occasionally in readability, they more than make up in utility. Hayes proves his book’s usefulness in his conclusion, where he correlates the fluctuating appreciation of Crane’s war dispatches with readers’ shifting political attitudes and sentiments toward war in general. By noting the universality of Crane’s political observations, Hayes encourages a re-examination of Crane’s wartime writings from a twenty-first-century perspective. Overall, readers who desire a more complete understanding of Crane scholarship and a push in the right critical direction will not be disappointed in Hayes’s study.

—Carolyn Stoermer, Wright State University


This book, a companion volume to _Twentieth-Century American Fiction on Screen_ (also edited by R. Barton Palmer), contains 14 essays on the film versions of 14 classic works by mostly nineteenth-century American writers. Despite the title, the works and writers discussed are not all nineteenth-century, strictly speaking.

Only three of the authors—Crane (_The Red Badge of Courage_), Dreiser (_Sister Carrie_), and London (_The Sea-Wolf_)—whose works are included are representatives of literary naturalism. There are three essays on film versions of Henry James’s novels and stories. Others represented are Cooper (_The Last of the Mohicans_), Hawthorne (_The Scarlet Letter_), Poe (“The Murders in the Rue Morgue”), Stowe (_Uncle Tom’s Cabin_), Alcott (_Little Women_), Melville (_Moby-Dick_), Lew Wallace (_Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ_; the book’s full title is unaccountably not given here), and Owen Wister (_The Virginian_).

In his introduction, Palmer notes that literary scholars have often tended to view film adaptations of literary works as “more or less irrelevant, if occasionally interesting, copies, as mere supplements to the literary source.” But these views are changing, Palmer notes, thanks largely to
the emergence of cultural studies (or cultural materialism, as it is known in Britain) as an academic discipline.

Representing a variety of disciplines (English, comparative literature, cultural studies, film studies, screenwriting, and television studies), the 17 contributors have combined literary analysis, which often provides a starting point for the essays, with a variety of questions related to filmmaking and the adaptation processes, including production considerations and economic realities, that play a crucial role in determining the acquisition and marketing of literary properties adapted to film. The contributors have made a major effort to probe questions involving gender issues, racial stereotyping, representation of minority groups, politics, censorship, and like considerations that have a decisive influence on such key film elements as scripting and casting, often conveying messages to the audience that are anything but subtle or that enable filmmakers to keep film content within boundaries considered safe or suitable for public consumption.

The reader of these essays will gain a fresh appreciation not only of classic literary works but also of film history itself. It is instructive, from a historical and cultural studies perspective—and indeed fascinating—to learn, for example, that *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was adapted for the screen nine times during the silent film era, beginning in 1903; that five silent films of *The Scarlet Letter* were made beginning in 1908 (and three more films, including one by German filmmaker Wim Wenders, since then); that 1926 silent and 1930 sound film versions of *Moby-Dick* were made before John Huston’s 1956 film of the novel; and that the first film version of *The Sea-Wolf* appeared in 1907.

In a lead essay on *The Last of the Mohicans*, Martin Barker and Roger Sabin use newly discovered archival material to show how the plot of the 1936 *Mohicans* film was altered in 11 versions of the screenplay, significantly changing Cooper’s novel. The alterations seem to have entailed a variety of ad hoc decisions reflecting mainly business considerations (with the director, George B. Seitz, the authors note, having had minimal involvement with the final product). The different film versions of *The Scarlet Letter* are shown by Michael Dunne to have been very much products of their times, catering to audience expectations. The 1932 Universal Pictures film *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, Paul Woolf shows in his essay, draws haphazardly on elements of Poe’s story, which has been transmuted from a detective story into a horror film with a “mad scientist” protagonist that plays to public fears and audience prejudices about issues such as miscegenation and evolution.
Anti-slavery scenes and messages in Stowe’s novel that would have offended Southern audiences were cut for the classic 1927 Universal Pictures silent film, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. *Little Women* exists in three film versions made during the sound era, and with each adaptation changes were made in which the directors tried to decide how the story should end and how the novel’s heroine, Jo March, should be portrayed when faced with choices “between husband and career, patriarchy and independence, obedience and rebellion,” as Deborah Cartmell and Judy Simons point out.

In a concluding portion of his essay, “Melville’s *Moby-Dick* and Hollywood,” David Lavery specifies several ingredients which he deems essential to a putative successful film version of the novel: namely, it must be humorous; must make Ishmael a prominent character and tell the story from Ishmael’s point of view; and must be faithful to Melville’s metaphoric structure. “*Moby-Dick* is a book, a poem really, with a 500-plus-page controlling metaphor,” Lavery observes. The existing films of the novel are “prosaic, literalist glosses.”

In his essay on *The Red Badge of Courage*, Jakob Lothe focuses on “the challenge of presenting literary impressionism on film.” Crane’s literary artistry, he observes, “blends naturalist and impressionist styles,” as does the director, John Huston, in his adaptation of the novel. Lothe’s carefully crafted essay demonstrates the value of critical analysis as a tool in both literary and film studies.

The three essays on Henry James adaptations—on Peter Bogdanovich’s *Daisy Miller*, by Douglas McFarland; on Jane Campion’s *The Portrait of a Lady*, by Harriet Margolis and Janet Hughes; and on the Merchant Ivory film *The Europeans*, by Brian McFarlane—are each of considerable interest because of the quality of the art films discussed. Of special interest are the analyses of the challenges involved in adapting to film fiction of a cerebral author such as James.

In his essay on William Wyler’s *Carrie* (the 1952 film version of Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie*), Stephen Brennan begins by noting that critics have tended to find it one of Wyler’s less successful films, concluding that it is an overly sentimental and static adaptation of the novel with an implicit “suburban” or “bourgeois” moral code and heroine. Brennan provides an informative revisionist account of how *Sister Carrie* was brought to the screen and Wyler’s role in making the film much stronger than it might otherwise have been.

A pleasure of reading these essays and also watching the films discussed therein is the challenge of making one’s own critical judgments.
Despite well founded criticisms by Michael Dunne in his essay on the 1934 film adaptation of *The Scarlet Letter*, I thought that there is no better portrayal of Hawthorne’s character the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale than in that film. I think (a point on which I am at least partially in disagreement with essayist David Lavery) that the 1998 made-for-television film of *Moby-Dick* does a remarkably good job of transmuting into film a nearly unfilmable novel and that two principal characters, Ahab and Starbuck, are marvelously cast and acted. I wondered why the essayists did not comment on the sheer darkness (of lighting) in Jane Campion’s film *The Portrait of a Lady* or on the wonderfully atmospheric and evocative opening scenes of a foggy San Francisco waterfront in the early 1900s as depicted in the 1941 adaptation of *The Sea-Wolf*, starring Edward G. Robinson.

The book includes a filmography as an appendix. The filmography is selective, by design. I wish it were more comprehensive. Not all the film versions discussed in the essays are included—for example, only the 1956 United Artists *Moby-Dick* and not the 1998 version. The 1932 film *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (comprising the heart of the cinematic analysis in the chapter on Poe) is not found in the filmography, but a 1971 American International Pictures version, which is discussed in the same essay in much less depth, is (while other post-1932 versions also in the essay are not included in the filmography). Production and other details on the films that are discussed at any length are essential for the reader, in my opinion.

These provocative, informative, and insightful essays open up new avenues of exploration for scholars and students, and the volume was designed with probable classroom use in mind. The book fills a gap in literary and film studies by demonstrating the role of film in what Palmer terms “furthering the reach of honored, significant, and popular literary texts.”

—Roger W. Smith


When Ann Petry published *The Street*, a compelling novel about an African-American woman’s futile struggle against the forces of race, class, and gender oppression, in 1946, she made an important contribution to