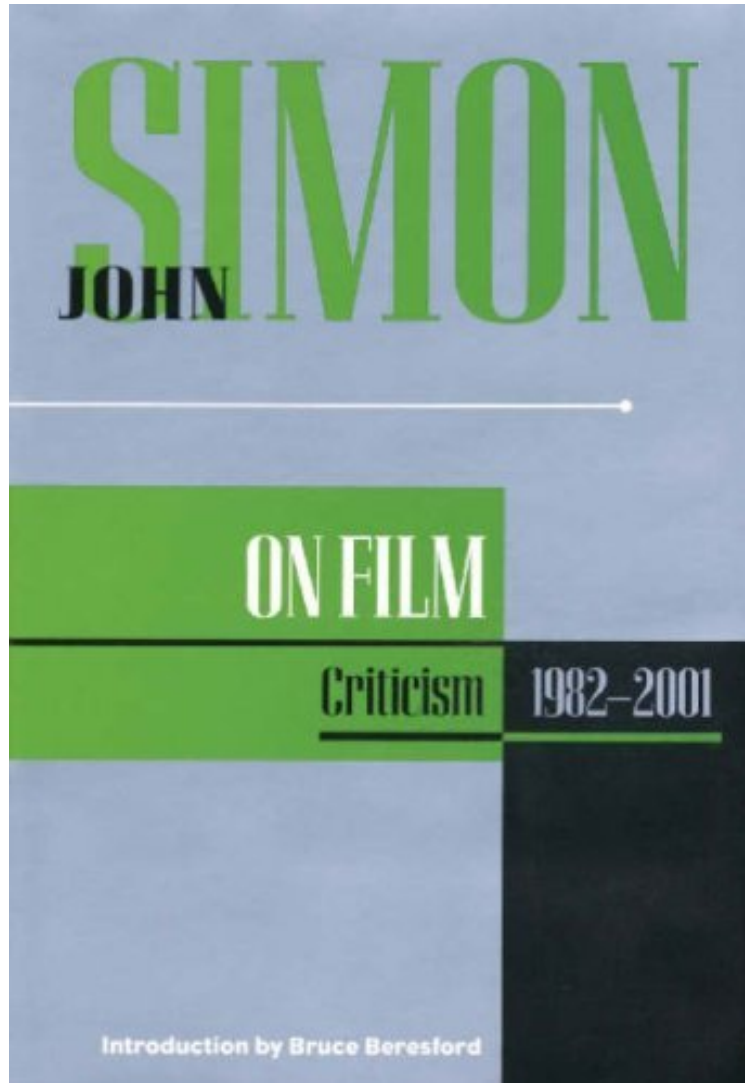


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John Simon on Film: Criticism 1982-2001 (Applause Books)

John Simon

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John Simon : John Simon on Film: Criticism 1982-2001 (Applause Books) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Simon on Film: Criticism 1982-2001 (Applause Books):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Delicious but low fatBy ChristopherI am reading this compilation of reviews now. It's interesting to note both the disintegration of film over the period of time this book covers and the downscaling of Simon's once delightfully baroque writing style. One wonders if editors told him to change his tune or if he decided himself to cut back on some of the things that made his previous compilations of reviews so wondrous--the grandiloquent, clause-upon-clause writing style, the hieratic vocabulary, the often justified observations on things (like actors' faces and bodies) that other critics avoid. I'm still enjoying these reviews, because they are written by a

man of high intelligence and great learning, but I am missing the vivid style and unfettered character of the earlier Simon. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An Outstanding Writer By Bruce Beresford I am biased, I suppose, as I wrote the introduction for this book. I consider John Simon to be an outstanding writer, not just about film but also theatre and classical music. He is not fooled by the merely fashionable although his enthusiasms often endorse the popular, no matter what his detractors say to the contrary. Above all, he writes with wit and insight. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. John Simon at the End of his Powers By Andrew J. Heller John Simon must be the best film reviewer ever to put words to paper. He has an incredible store of knowledge of literature, art, film history and especially language. He speaks at least 6 languages, and seems to have consumed most of the world's greatest fiction, poems, essays and plays. On top of all that, he was once one of the funniest, most incisive writers I have ever read. I have read and re-read his books of film criticism: *Movies Into Film*, *Reverse Angle*, *Something to Declare*, and I can recommend them all as straight literature, as humor writing or as instruction (by example) the art of film criticism. What I cannot do, unfortunately, is recommend this book. The prose is ordinary and the criticism is nothing special. Either it has been dumbed down on purpose (although I can't imagine why he would try to pander to an audience at this point in his career), or, more likely, he simply is not capable of what he achieved in his earlier work. There is even the ultimate surrender where Simon refers without irony to his long-time foe (and long-time foe of the idea of film as art), as the "wonderful" Pauline Kael. Ehhh! Moreover, the reviews consist mostly of plot recapitulation. I had an e-mail correspondence with him, and I asked him about this. He replied that reviews that consisted mostly of recounting the film's plot were not very good. Sadly, so very sadly (because I had also waited many years for this book), this book consists of exactly that kind of review, and it is not very good.

(Applause Books). "I find John's critical writing immensely entertaining even when I'm not in agreement... He has the gift, such a rare one, of being able to analyze the work in question, to be able to say why it is that it's so powerful, so touching; or, on the other hand, so trite, so meretricious, or so banal... I find his reviews full of insights and perceptions that make reading a collection of this sort as exciting as reading a gripping novel. John's wit is dazzling and is never displayed for its own sake, but to drive home an aspect of the review... It was exciting for me to read through this collection and see such warm praise for so many films that I feel have been unjustly ignored." Bruce Beresford

About the Author John Simon (1925-) was born in Yugoslavia and awarded his PhD in comparative literature from Harvard University. He has written theatre, film, music, and book reviews for many eminent publications, inc. New York, Esquire, Hudson, Opera News, and the New York Times Book. He is a past winner of the George Jean Nathan Award and the George Polk Award for Film Criticism. He lives in New York City. Bruce Beresford is the acclaimed director of *Breaker Morant*, and *Driving Miss Daisy* among others