

## The Lasting Influence of the War on Postwar British Film

*M. Boyce*

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**M. Boyce : The Lasting Influence of the War on Postwar British Film** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Lasting Influence of the War on Postwar British Film:

Many of the most celebrated British films of the immediate post-war period (1945-55) seem to be occupied with "getting on" with life and offering distraction for postwar audiences. It is the time of the celebrated Ealing comedies, *Hue and Cry* (1946) and *Kind Hearts and Coronets* (1949), Dickens adaptations, and the most ambitious projects of the Archers. While the war itself is rarely mentioned in these films, the war and the conditions of postwar society lie at the

heart of understanding them. While various studies have focused on lesser known realist films, few consider how deeply and completely the war affected British film. Michael W. Boyce considers the preoccupation of these films with profound anxieties and uncertainties about what life was going to be like for postwar Britain, what roles men and women would play, how children would grow up, even what it meant - and what it still means today - to be British.

"With scrupulous and brilliant close analysis of key films and stars, Boyce reveals and complicates a new era of 'Britishness' in the immediate postwar years, one irrevocably marked by war trauma. In remarkably clear prose, *The Lasting Influence of the War on Postwar British Film* illustrates a social and historical unconscious that has largely been ignored yet emerges as a crucial period in the history of British cinema and nation (re)building." - Dina Smith, associate professor of English, Drake University 'Like Raymond Durnat's and Charles Barr's exceptional studies of English cinema, Michael Boyce's work combines highly informed and nuanced cultural commentary with elegant close readings of individual films. Boyce offers surprising insights on a great many topics, from the strained rhetoric of accommodation and the beleaguered assertions of resistance dramatized in such 'conservative' films as *Brief Encounter* and *In Which We Serve* to the oblique, searching commentary on children displaced from their homes during the war in the adaptations of Dickens novels. Again and again, Boyce overturns received ideas about performers and genres in the austere, post-war environment, and does so in a manner that is witty, self-questioning, and alive to narrative pleasures of every sort.' - George Toles, University of Manitoba  
About the Author  
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