

Introduction

CHRISTOPHER J. OLSON

The current special issue of the journal focuses primarily on examining queer Black experiences within the matrix of popular culture, but it also considers how a variety of other intersectional identities are represented in media. The reviews included in this issue also introduce readers to monographs, memoirs, anthologies, and other texts that explore and portray a multitude of identities and issues from various perspectives. From game studies to streaming video to the abortion debate, and from Paris Hilton to Godzilla to Harry Belafonte, the reviews gathered in this issue look at numerous books, films, games, and TV series that present and/or interrogate several identities and experiences.

Books reviewed in this issue include *Splice: The Novelization*, which adapts the 2009 film of the same name and, according to Christopher J. Olson, offers increased insight into the characters' inner worlds while also helping to pull back the curtain on neurodivergence. Jennifer A. Zenovich, meanwhile, reviews *Portable Postsocialisms: New Cuban Mediascapes after the End of History* by Paloma Duong, who endeavors to demystify Cuban representation onscreen. Mickey Randle discusses Sonia Fizek's *Playing at a Distance: Borderlands of Video Game Aesthetic*, which analyzes the different ways that players interact with games. Shifting from video games to music, Megan Powell informs readers about Jörg Heiser's *Double Lives in Art and Pop Music*, which considers the relationships between art and pop music and the impulses that lead people to create both. Elsewhere, Amy Absher argues that *Paris: The Memoir* offers more than just an account of the world-famous socialite's tumultuous life; it also functions as a critical examination of how American popular culture treats women. Bia Cassano writes about author Cary Millsap-Spears's *Star Trek Discovery and the Female Gothic: Tell Fear No*, which explores the connection between *Star Trek: Discovery* and feminist Gothic literature of the 1800s. Daniel Cunningham discusses Jeff Sharlet's *The Undertow: Scenes from a Slow Civil War*, a timely book that considers the wider sociopolitical implications of singer and actor Harry Belafonte's efforts to advance social justice.

This issue also features reviews of edited anthologies devoted to collecting scholarship on relevant topics and critical debates. For instance, Lori Roles alerts

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readers to editors Brenda Boudreau and Kelli Maloy's urgent collection *Abortion in Popular Culture: A Call to Action*, which collects essays that analyze how media contribute to public perception on the topic of reproductive choice. Turning to the less politically charged but nevertheless significant topic of streaming video, Christine F. Smith reviews Arienne Ferchaud and Jennifer M. Proffitt's *Television's Streaming Wars*, a collection that explores the struggles for power within the contemporary media ecology. Finally, Melissa Beattie offers her thoughts on *Women We Love: Femininities and the Korean Wave* from editors SooJin Lee, Kate Korroch, and Khiun, Liew Kai, who have gathered writings that provide readers with a comprehensive introduction to Hallyu (aka the Korean Wave) specifically and feminist media studies more generally.

In addition to books, this issue also features reviews of films, TV series, and video games, all of which could be useful in pedagogical or scholarly situations. First, Elizabeth Shiller discusses the video-game-to-film adaptation *Five Nights at Freddy's*, focusing on the importance of imagery to both the game and its big-screen iteration. Following this, Carlos Tkacz reviews the worldwide cultural phenomenon *Godzilla Minus One*, arguing that the film highlights the title character's malleability and enduring popularity with audiences everywhere. Dennis Owen Frohlich turns his attention to the world of tabletop gaming with his review of the board game *Legacy of Yu*, which Frohlich argues transports to a world of adventure thanks to exquisite art, immersive gameplay, and a gripping story rooted in historical events. Lastly, Kendall Belopavlovich considers how the recently canceled streaming series *Reservation Dogs* helps viewers understand and explore the contemporary experiences of Indigenous Americans.

As always, I want to thank my assistant reviews editor, Casey O'Ceallaigh, for helping to ensure that these reviews are ready for publication. Without their feedback and keen eye for detail, these reviews would likely be riddled with errors. I also want to thank all the reviewers who contributed their thoughts about books and other media texts; without them this section would be a barren wasteland. Finally, I want to thank all the readers who take time out of their busy schedules to read these reviews. I hope we have pointed you toward some texts that prove useful in your own research. If any of you want to contribute a review of a book, movie, game, or some other media text to the *Popular Culture Studies Journal*, please reach out to me via email at reviews@mpcaaca.org. Until next time, take care.