



Not Hollywood: Independent Film at the Twilight of the American Dream

Sherry B. Ortner

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The pioneering anthropologist Sherry B. Ortner combines her trademark ethnographic expertise with critical film interpretation to explore the independent film scene in New York and Los Angeles since the late 1980s. *Not Hollywood* is both a study of the lived experience of that scene and a critical examination of America as seen through the lenses of independent filmmakers. Based on interviews with scores of directors and producers, Ortner reveals the culture and practices of indie filmmaking, including the conviction of those involved that their films, unlike Hollywood movies, are "telling the truth" about American life. These films often illuminate the dark side of American society through narratives about the family, the economy, and politics in today's neoliberal era. Offering insightful interpretations of many of these films, Ortner argues that during the past three decades independent American cinema has functioned as a vital form of cultural critique.

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