



Deconstructing Brad Pitt

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Brad Pitt is probably the most famous American actor alive today. Bloomsbury makes available for the first time an academic study of this iconic star, *Deconstructing Brad Pitt*. Editors Christopher Schaberg and Robert Bennett extensively rework problems of celebrity, gender, and consumer society; question the possibilities of star personae and their consequent notions of identity and performance; and ingeniously disrupt the positions of actor and viewer in the text. The book will assist readers pro and con in coming to terms with this magnetic figure.

Deconstructing Brad Pitt is extraordinary in many ways, most obviously in its approach. Arranged as an edited collection, with a framing personal narrative, the book simultaneously discusses Pitt's film roles and contemporary culture at large, and shows how two such seemingly distinct kinds of criticism can reflect and influence one another. The customary segregation of fandom and academic critique is systematically subverted. In design and content, the book calls into question 'types' of acting (Hollywood mainstream, quirky artistic), the ownership of ideas and styles, the glorification of heroes, and the limits of representation.

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Editorial Review

Review

With just the right mix of wit, self-awareness, and critical passion, the authors subject the curious case of brand Pitt--artist and star, boy toy and generational icon, Redford scion and Ninth Ward architect, Chanel shill and co-proprietor of the going concern known as Brangelina--to edifying and satisfying scrutiny. Eric Lott, City University of New York, The Graduate Center, USA Deconstructing Brad Pitt will shock you the moment you find out it exists. The instinctive reaction to such a work is that academic analysis and Hollywood stardom do not make good bedfellows. This is exactly why you open the first page, and you find yourself hooked ... It is a highly readable book, full of personal insights, first-person narratives and analyses based on the cultural studies literature. -- Helena Vieira LSE Review of Books In this exciting anthology, Schaberg and Bennett continue the work of DeAngelis, Negra, and Pomerance, once again demonstrating that an intensive study of a popular Hollywood film star will reveal not the margins, but the center of how American culture functions. The path charted by Richard Dyer 35 years ago has led to a flourishing of analyses of stardom, wonderfully executed here by Schaberg, Bennett, and their collaborators, who skillfully interrogate Brad Pitt's cinematic, popular, and political image. The first rule of Brad Pitt Studies is you MUST read and talk about *Deconstructing Brad Pitt*! Walter Metz, Southern Illinois University, USA *Deconstructing Brad Pitt*, edited by Robert Bennett and Christopher Schaberg, is an anthology of multi-disciplinary, multi-perspectival engagements with the figure of Brad Pitt. The book is a strange and compelling meshwork of affect, memory and desire, as each author/artist follows a richly surprising line that leads readers to places they might never have found on their own. Some of these places are whimsical while others are more perilous and reverberate with disaster, crises, madness, and failure. It would quite miss the point to say that this collection is a celebrity study - it transverses multiple disciplines from cultural studies to psychoanalysis to new materialist feminism and queer theory. Yet, it is not bound by any of these approaches. Ranging from visual essays to personal accounts, the collection articulates "Brad Pitt" as an event that is proximate to place, industry, nature, ruin, representation, and resilience. Moving into and away from the performative features of Brad Pitt, as celebrity and as citizen who could be considered the unofficial mayor of New Orleans, *Deconstructing Brad Pitt* invites us to imagine what it might be like to theorize engagement as entanglement, as a productive crash into the objects that surround us. It invites us to take seriously what others too quickly ignore or leave behind. Joy V. Fuqua, Associate Professor of Media Studies, Queens College/CUNY, USA, and author of *Prescription TV: Therapeutic Discourse in the Hospital and at Home* (2012) An in-depth look into the cultural phenomenon called Brad Pitt, this book is for both fans and detractors of the actor. If you are expecting tabloid fodder and TMZ-like stories, don't pick up this book because *Deconstructing Brad Pitt* by Christopher Schaberg and Robert Bennett is a serious academic treatise which happens to be an easy and fun read. -- Mari Davis Marienela.net *Deconstructing Brad Pitt* is an ambitious exploration of Brad Pitt as a man, actor and celebrity. ...a fascinating exploration of Brad Pitt as an icon, the roles he has played and the impact of his celebrity status on contemporary life. Celebrity Studies Overall *Deconstructing Brad Pitt* is a compelling read, most suitable for a scholarly audience though accessible to well-read mass audience that seeks thoughtful commentary on American popular culture. Pitt as actor, celebrity, philanthropist, father, partner, environmentalist, liberal activist, man, tabloid fodder, artist sheds light on many aspects of American popular culture and society. American Studies

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Christopher Schaberg is Associate Professor of English at Loyola University New Orleans, USA, and author of *The Textual Life of Airports: Reading the Culture of Flight* (2013).

Robert Bennett is Associate Professor of English at Montana State University-Bozeman, USA, and author of *Deconstructing Post-WWII New York City: The Literature, Art, Jazz, and Architecture of an Emerging Global Capital* (2003).

Users Review

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