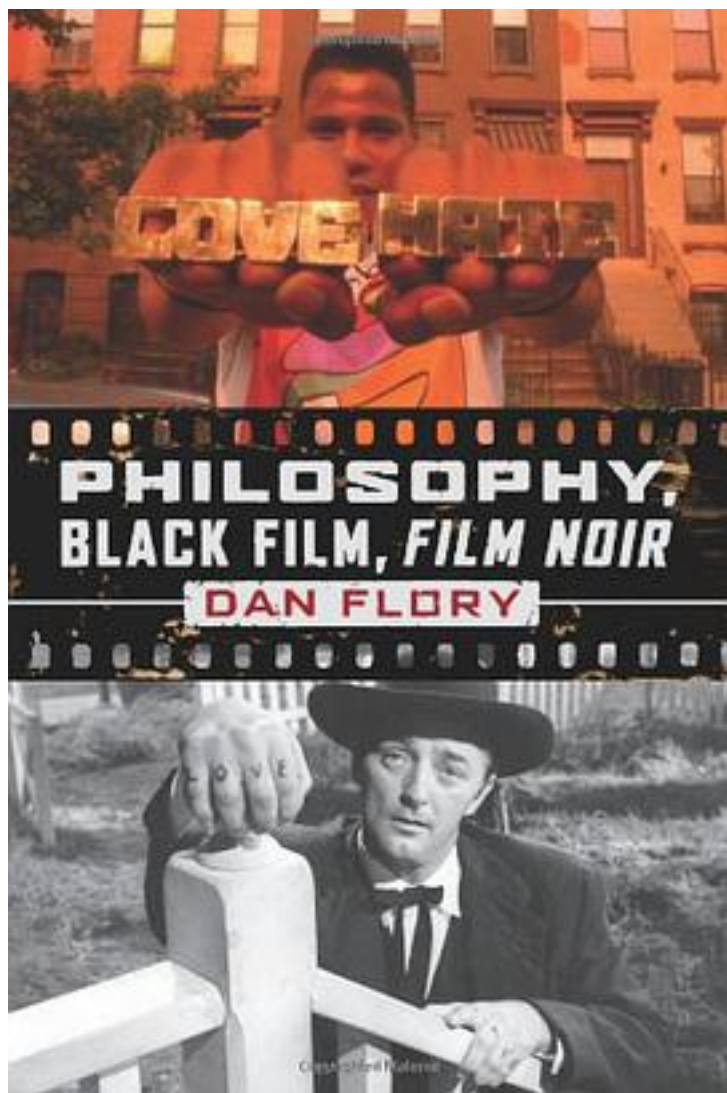# Philosophy, Black Film, Film Noir

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著者:Flory, Dan

出版者:

出版时间:2008-6

装帧:

isbn:9780271033440

In the past two decades, African American filmmakers like Spike Lee have made significant contributions to the dialogue about race in the United States by adapting techniques from classic film noir to black American cinema. This book is the first to examine these artistic innovations in detail from a philosophical perspective informed by both cognitive film theory and critical race theory. Dan Flory explores the techniques and themes that are used in black film noir to orchestrate the audience's emotions of sympathy and empathy felt toward morally complex characters whom people might not typically find appealing in real life, such as thugs, drug dealers, or murderers. Using an approach that combines the cognitive insights of theorists like David Bordwell, Noel Carroll, and Murray Smith with the reflective Wittgensteinian methods for considering film employed by Stanley Cavell, Stephen Mulhall, and William Rothman, Flory shows how these films scrutinize the state of race in America, induce their viewers to do so as well, and illuminate the ways in which categories of race have defined and continue to direct much of our vision of the moral self and what counts as appropriate moral sensibility.

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