

Films of the New French Extremity: Visceral Horror and National Identity

Alexandra West

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The films of the New French Extremity have been reviled by critics but adored by fans and filmmakers. Known for graphically brutal depictions of sex and violence, the subgenre emerged from the French arthouse scene in the late 1990s and became a cult phenomenon, eventually merging into the horror genre where it became associated with American torture porn.

Decidedly French in flavor, the films seek to reveal the dark side of French society. This book provides an in-depth study of New French Extremity, focusing on such films as Trouble Every Day (2001), Irreversible (2002), Twentynine Palms (2003), High Tension (2003) and Martyrs (2008). The author explores the social implications of cinematic cruelty presented not as "violent films" but as "films about violence."



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