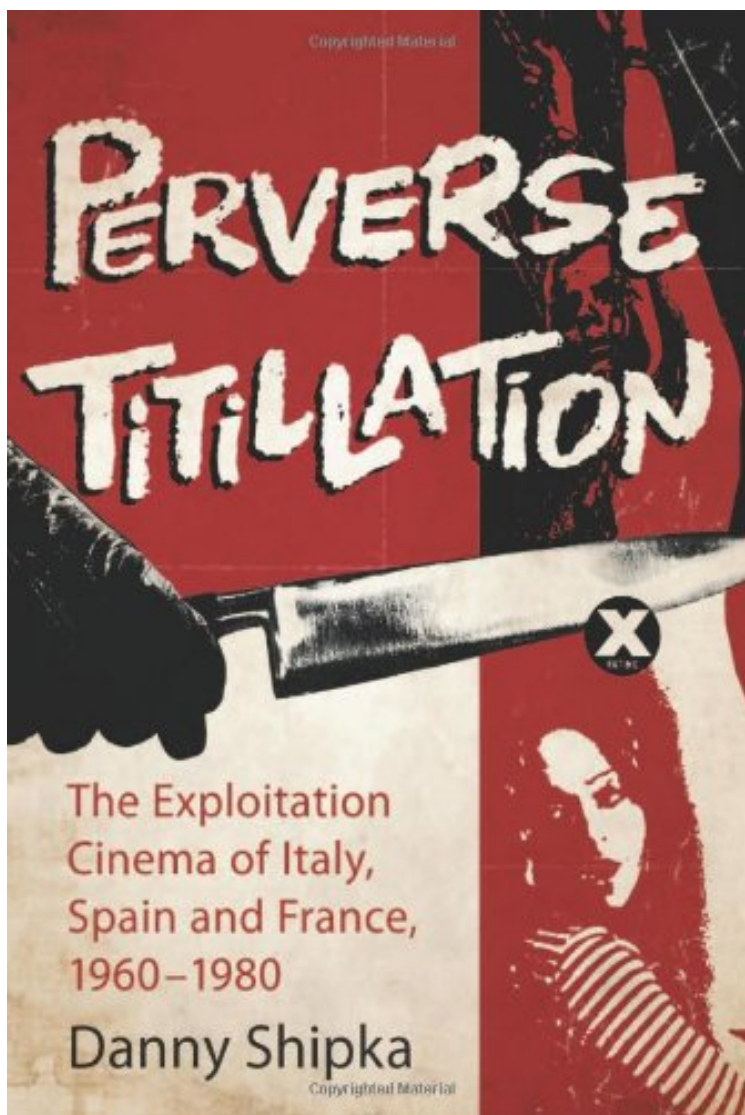


Perverse Titillation: The Exploitation Cinema of Italy, Spain and France, 1960-1980

Danny Shipka

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review helpful. Great book! By MaggieI bought this book as a gift for my boyfriend who loved it! It shipped quickly and was here in no time. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Exploring The Guilty Pleasures Of Euro Exploitation... By 4-Legged Defender [Perverse Titillation - The Exploitation Cinema of Italy, Spain and France, 1960-1980 by Danny Shipka - 2011] As someone who's had a penchant and unshakable weakness for Eurohorror films on TV since the mid 60's when I was a young impressionable kid, and a Eurocult enthusiast since the early 70's when once-reputable theaters in my neighborhood morphed into grindhouse grotto's almost overnight, I had to hear someone else's insights into these once-ignored genres of cinema, which thankfully have come to be re-evaluated if not respected and newly appreciated in languid hindsight decades after the fact. There's something here for all levels of aficionados, from entry-level and occasional fans those rabid and militant like myself, who own hundreds of these flicks. Shipka's style of writing is informative though not too academic or dry, and is occasionally humorous, and each country is given its own segment chronicling the history and relevance of these films, followed by a filmography with synopses of most of the films discussed. There is a bit of redundancy here, as a film's plot is unveiled during the course of the country's output, and then rehashed verbatim later in the filmography review. But, for most, this is a petty complaint. The section on Italy is the longest as they produced more of these films than the other two countries combined, but unfortunately, only the most well-recognized films are covered, there are no rarities unearthed, no gems of unknown enjoyment for those versed in this genre. Naturally, there are details chronicling the careers of grandfathers Bava, Freda and Margheriti, along with godfathers Fulci, Argento and D'Amato, but Umberto Lenzi's early gialli are conspicuously absent. There is a healthy dose of early Italian gothic horror flicks, mondo oddities, cannibal and zombie fests, exorcism and naughty nun niblets, and the sex and sadism cinema we all have grown to know and love (some of us a bit more than others, I might add). A fine overview of all categories are mentioned, though maybe not plumbed in the extreme, as I might have liked - another minor gripe, but as someone who literally owns every film documented in this book, I claim entitlement to my opinions. The chapter on Spain's output was the favorite for me, as it involved a highly detailed and well-crafted chronicle on the most prolific of all sleazemeisters, the blasphemous but legendary Jess Franco, who's made some of the best and worst exploitation flicks to ever come off the assembly line of questionable viewing. An exceptional homage laid out properly. Too many folks dismiss Franco for his failings, but here was a deserved tribute to the auteur demon of decadence. Also noted were directors Armando De Ossorio, Jorge Grau and Paul Naschy. Great stuff. The French were never big on the sadism and violence that perpetuated the Italian and Spanish flicks, having a preference for the sexual aspects instead, so the installment here focuses more on the few truly notable entries like Franju's 'Eyes Without a Face' and the psychedelic sins of Jean Rollin ("Narrative? What narrative? Who needs a stinking narrative when we have lesbian vampires?") And let us not forget the impact of Just Jaekin's 'The Story of O' and the first two 'Emmanuelle' films that made it safe for the arthouse crowd to sit side by side with the raincoat crowd during the 70's. Good times indeed. The best feature this book held for me was the fantastic selection of rare foreign poster art reproductions that are peppered throughout - even in B+W they're wickedly fetching and, after finishing the book, you'll find yourself ransacking it again for more visual 'perverse titillations'. All in all, a necessity for those whose interests in this arena are high - four stars for jaded souls like me who are on a constant, unhealthy search under every rock for a film that slipped under the radar, but a full five star book for those with a normal quotient for 'Perverse Titillations'. Essential.

The exploitation film industry of Italy, Spain and France during the height of its popularity from 1960 to 1980 is the focus of this entertaining history. With subject matter running the gamut from Italian zombies to Spanish werewolves to French lesbian vampires, the shocking and profoundly entertaining motion pictures of the "Eurocult" genre are discussed from the standpoint of the films and the filmmakers, including such internationally celebrated auteurs as Mario Bava, Jess Franco, Jean Rollin and Paul Naschy. The Eurocult phenomenon is also examined in relation to the influences that European culture and environment have had on the world of exploitation cinema. The author's insight and expertise contribute to a greater understanding of what made these films special--and why they have remained so popular to later generations.

"A fantastic read...an excellent, big-picture look." --Bookgasm
"Invaluable guide...is an indispensable purchase." --Crime Time
About the Author
Danny Shipka is an assistant professor at Oklahoma State University in the School of Strategic Communication Media.