Social values form an important part of the culture of the society. Values account for the stability of social order. They provide the general guidelines for social conduct. Values such as fundamental rights, patriotism, respect for human dignity, rationality, sacrifice, individuality, equality, democracy etc. guide our behaviour in many ways. Values are the criteria people use in assessing their daily lives; arrange their priorities and choosing between alternative course of action. G.R. Leslie, R.F. Larson, H.L. Gorman say, “Values are group conceptions of the relative desirability of things...

Michael Haralambos says “A value is a belief that something is good and worthwhile. It defines what is worth having and worth striving...” Robin Write at writeoutofla.com shares his favorite Best Screenplay winners at Cannes. I am not fully aware of where the balance of power lies in this industry with regards to the writers. The screenwriters. I still think, to many of us on the outside looking in, that many of the scriptwriters are perhaps not getting the coverage for their achievements they deserve. That and ninety-nine other problems in the movie business. Being in the screenwriting field myself, you have to forgive me for singing loudly in this choir. The sheer range of winners in Cannes with the Prix du scénario (award for best Screenplay) is still impressive, even if limited by the fact this particular prize was not even awarded for nearly half the years it existed.

Abstract

In studying Cannes’s Best Screenplay award my aim was to better understand the prestige and the meaning making processes that surround the Festival de Cannes. To conduct this research on how awards perform the cultural identity of film festivals, I applied Pierre Bourdieu’s theories on capital, culture, art and distinction (1984, 1993, 1996, and more) together with reception studies and film festival theories. Accordingly, the festival’s prestige is regarded as socially sustained and giving out several awards strengthens and organises its collective network (Marijke De Valck 2007). Simultaneously, reinforcing Cannes’s prestige and its identity values secures the position and influence of those same social agents in the economies, cultures and geopolitics of cinema. In my research I examine a set period, from 2006 to 2014, in order to connect the tensions that cut through the Festival de Cannes back to wider frames of reference and back to concrete contexts which are relevant to our understanding of how and why certain films win awards while others are overlooked. Given that film festivals attach symbolic capital (Pierre Bourdieu 1979) and contribute to the construction of films as cultural products (Janet Harbord 2002), this study provides increased knowledge of the broader ramifications that film festival awards have for industrial and cultural dimensions of filmmaking.

The Festival de Cannes can be seen as a network constructed brand that generates symbolic capital and reifies meaning making possibilities (adding to the works of Julian Stringer 2003a, Liz Czach 2004, Thomas Elsaesser 2005, Rosalind Galt 2010, Cindy Wong 2011, Dorota Ostrowska 2016, and others). In this light, Cannes’s Best Screenplay Award serves to reinforce certain cinema values that the Festival de Cannes brand is associated with: diversity, reflecting the world we live in and, paradoxically, also authorship.