



## Contemporary Costume Film: Space, Place and the Past

By Julianne Piddock

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### Contemporary Costume Film: Space, Place and the Past By Julianne Piddock

Within the 1990s, costume drama has proliferated internationally as a popular, critically acclaimed, and controversial cinematic cycle. While critics lambast British "heritage cinema" as a nostalgic anachronism, *Contemporary Costume Film* argues that these films use the frame of the past to dramatize postmodern dilemmas. These dilemmas include gender, class, colonial, and queer struggles over representations of the past; "heritage tourism" and cultural identity; love and intimacy in a postmodern age; quality culture and authorship in an age of cultural recycling. Addressing a wide range of important recent films including *Orlando*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Portrait of a Lady*, *The Age of Innocence*, *Dangerous Liaisons*, *Gosford Park*, *Elizabeth*, *Edward II*, and *An Ideal Husband*, the book combines close readings of specific films and filmmakers with an extensive genre study of English-language costume film. Critical attention to issues of space, place, and the past bring into relief both costume drama's increasingly international scope and the symbolic struggles that take place within its frame.

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## Contemporary Costume Film: Space, Place and the Past By Julianne Pidduck Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #5831894 in Books
- Brand: Brand: British Film Institute
- Published on: 2007-09-27
- Released on: 2008-01-22
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.00" w x 6.00" l, .41 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 188 pages



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#### About the Author

**Julianne Pidduck** lectures in Film and Cultural studies at the Institute for Cultural Research at Lancaster University.

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