



# **Running Scared: Masculinity and the Representation of the Male Body (Culture And The Moving Image)**

*Peter Lehman*

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Our patriarchal culture keeps the male body and especially male genitals out of sight. This scheme, Peter Lehman argues, maintains the 'male mystique' and preserves the power of the phallus. Society's intentional blindness to male sexual representation cultivates 'good taste' and avoids perversion. Lehman draws back the curtain. "Running Scared" brings representations of phallic masculinity into the spotlight at last, documenting the pervasive anxiety underlying images of the male body. Lehman confronts cultural taboos primarily through his re-reading of films, as well as through analyses of novels, paintings, photographs, popular music, jokes, and videos. He examines the male polarity of hero/vulnerable failure through many lenses, from a study of the symbolic enculturation of males in feral child films "The Wild Child", "Kaspar Hauser", and "Greystroke" through an analysis of the loss of culturally sanctioned power in Rio Bravo. Abandoning distinctions between 'high art' and popular culture, "Running Scared" invokes Jim Thompson's noir novel "The Nothing Man" along with works by Hemingway and compares hard-core pornography with classical cinema. Lehman examines the work of openly gay filmmakers such as Almodovar and Fassbinder to see what they say about heterosexual male and female spectatorship. Focusing on Nagisa Oshima's "In the Realm of the Senses", he compares Asian representations of the male body to Western representations. Exploring the reverse of the macho image the vulnerable, passive, masochistic, or humiliated dreamer in the concluding chapter, Lehman addresses the fears and homophobia of heterosexual men that have resulted in near silence on issues of the representation of male sexuality. Author note: Peter Lehman is Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Media Arts at the University of Arizona. Founding editor of the journal "Wide Angle" and former president of the Society for Cinema Studies, he has published several other books, including Authorship and Narrative in the Cinema (with William Luhr).

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