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MacMillan

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MacMillan : 100 Years of American Film (MacMillan Compendium) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 100 Years of American Film (MacMillan Compendium):

From Library Journal This is an encyclopedic compendium of information regarding the American motion picture industry. The unsigned entries (excerpted largely from previously published sources, which are not cited) cover actors, producers, directors, films, genres, terms, organizations, and miscellaneous related topics. Other "sidebar" features include quotations, film facts, award winners, and many photographs. Also included are extensive cross references, a comprehensive index, a list of Academy Award winners, and a glossary of terms. Beaver (film and video, Univ. of Michigan; Dictionary of Film Terms) clearly intends this volume to be the ultimate film reference. Unfortunately, however, there are problems with the content. First, there is no explanation of the criteria. For example, British filmmakers David Lean and Lindsay Anderson are included, but American filmmakers John Cassavetes and Spike Lee are not, which is perplexing given the supposed American focus. Second, without explanation, some actors are included within the alphabetical arrangement, and some are highlighted in gray boxes interposed within the text. Not usually placed in their alphabetical location, the highlighted stars appear to be afterthoughts, and one must look in the

index or table of contents to find them, which defeats the purpose of the encyclopedic organization. And last, the poorly reproduced illustrations are all too dark, sometimes to the point of obscuring the artistry behind the carefully composed images. The information included here is useful, but because of the problems, the cost, and the plethora of film books available, one might prefer to buy two or three other books with smaller scopes, such as Ephraim Katz's *The Film Encyclopedia* (HarperPerennial, 1998. 3d ed.) or *The New York Times Guide to the Best Movies Ever Made* (LJ 11/1/99).
DJulia Stump, Voorheesville P.L., NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.