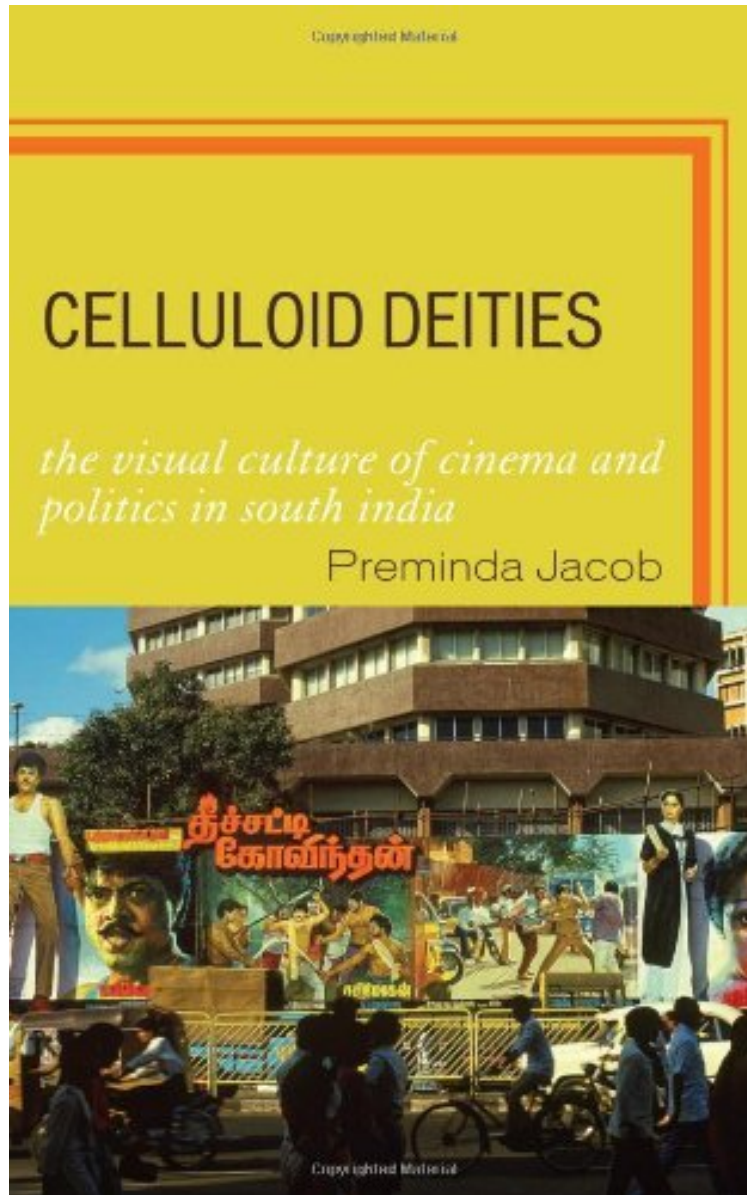


Celluloid Deities: The Visual Culture of Cinema and Politics in South India

Preminda Jacob

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Preminda Jacob : Celluloid Deities: The Visual Culture of Cinema and Politics in South India before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Celluloid Deities: The Visual Culture of Cinema and Politics in South India:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Ok, I'm biased By Red Baron Yes, I've known the author for years.

The point is, I really enjoy this book; I've read several chapters two or three times. The interviews, the photos, the history and analyses capture the pulse of a mass art world, inextricably entwined in the politics of South India, that few Westerners knew existed. You can see an interview of the author by the Indian novelist Manil Suri on Youtube. Preminda Jacob also maintains a website of some of the color images and interviews from the project.

Towering billboards featuring photorealistic portraits of popular cinema stars and political leaders dominated the cityscape of Chennai, in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu, throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Studying the manufacture and reception of these billboards—known locally as banners and cutouts—within the context of the entwined histories of the cinema industry and political parties in Tamil Nadu, Preminda Jacob reveals the broader significance of these fragments of visual culture beyond their immediate function as pretty pieces of advertising. Jacob analyzes the juxtaposition of cinematic and political imagery in the extra-cinematic terrain of Chennai's city streets and how this placement was pivotal to the elevation of regional celebrities to cult status. When interpreting these images and discussing their political and cultural resonance within the Tamil Nadu community, Jacob draws upon multiple perspectives to give appropriate context to this fascinating form of visual media.