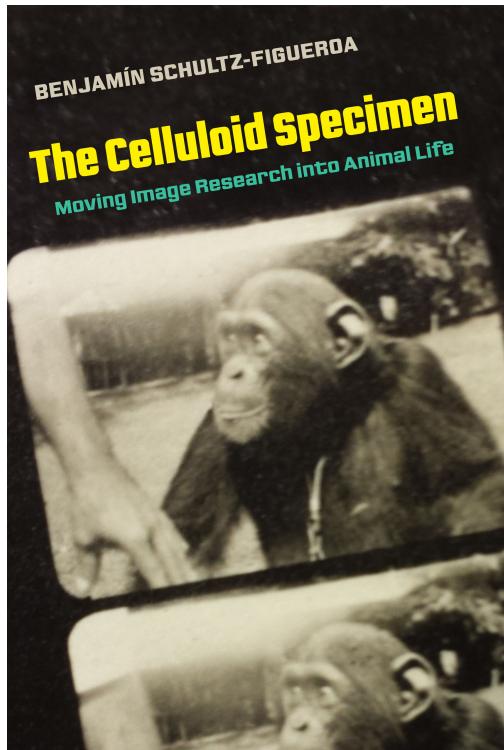


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The Celluloid Specimen

Moving Image Research into Animal Life

BENJAMIN SCHULTZ-FIGUEROA

"In the present moment, in which assessment and behavioral paradigms rule, Benjamín Schultz-Figueroa reveals the central role played by media forms in psychology's obsession with animal models. What does television have to do with the Skinner box? Animal films with IQ tests? This book is essential reading for anyone in behavioral science who cares about the broader social impacts of animal studies on social dynamics of power and control, and to anyone in media studies who cares about the human preoccupation with animals as celluloid surrogates, models of human behavior in research shoring up information-age capitalist systems."—Lisa Cartwright, Professor of Visual Arts, UC San Diego

"*The Celluloid Specimen* is a remarkable and urgently needed book. Founding a vibrant dialogue at the intersection of cinema studies, history of science, and critical animal studies, Schultz-Figueroa disinters an extraordinary lost archive that sheds new light on race, eugenics, species, the science of sex, and biopolitics. A resonant—and stunningly clear—intervention."—Donovan Schaefer, author of *Wild Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism after Darwin*

"Animal laboratory films make up a significant percentage of the filmic archive. And yet no one until now has fully explored the deeper context—and unfolding implications—of this overlooked but extremely influential genre. How lucky we are, then, that the first person to do so is Schultz-Figueroa, who has now installed a fascinating and important new landmark at the increasingly busy crossroads between animal studies and critical media theory."—Dominic Pettman, author of *Peak Libido: Sex, Ecology, and the Collapse of Desire*

"A fertile, sprawling, kaleidoscopic work that examines animal research films from surprising angles. With unprecedented access to archival material, Schultz-Figueroa persuasively demonstrates the central role of film in creating an analogy between animal and human behavior. No book outlines the multiple functions of the scientific moving image as thoroughly. *The Celluloid Specimen* is a brilliant and essential addition to animal studies, cinema and media studies, and the history of science."—Scott Curtis, author of *The Shape of Spectatorship: Art, Science, and Early Cinema in Germany*

"Seriously speculative, meticulously researched, and boldly interdisciplinary, *The Celluloid Specimen* cross-pollinates nontheatrical film studies and critical animal studies with stunning acumen and gripping analysis. Striding beyond the ontological human-animal 'encounter' model, this groundbreaking book decisively debunks the posthuman euphoria through its incisive deep historicization of three sets of American laboratory animal films that are fascinating, disturbing, and impactful to the present day. Presented in elegantly lucid writing, this powerfully nuanced study will captivate scholars and students interested in film and media studies, critical animal studies, critical race and ethnic studies, science and technology, psychology, and more."—Yiman Wang, Professor of Film and Digital Media, UC Santa Cruz

"*The Celluloid Specimen* is the rare book that breaks new ground in more fields than one. With a focus on primatology, Schultz-Figueroa shows how film shapes knowledge production in the behavioral and life sciences and sets a new standard in the study of moving image-based research in science and technology studies. And by tracing the afterlife of animals in the archives of scientific film, he contributes to the transformation and expansion of film and media studies' notion of what cinema is and can be. Impressive in scope and depth and elegantly written, *The Celluloid Specimen* is a must-read for both historians of science and lovers of cinema."—Vinzenz Hediger, Professor of Cinema



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Studies, Goethe University, Frankfurt

"What bleeds just past the edges of the frame? In *The Celluloid Specimen*, Schultz-Figueroa gives a remarkably compelling account of twentieth-century behaviorism, three of its key players (Yerkes, Miller, Skinner), and their experimental animals of choice (ape, rat, pigeon). By tracing the ways that theoretical and embodied entanglements—and sometimes dismemberings—stretch beyond any neatly bordered on-screen capture, Schultz-Figueroa's genealogy offers not just a vividly rendered history but also unique insights into our contemporary condition."—Gregory J. Seigworth, co-editor of *The Affect Theory Reader*

A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit www.luminosoa.org to learn more. In *The Celluloid Specimen*, Benjamín Schultz-Figueroa examines rarely seen behaviorist films of animal experiments from the 1930s and 1940s. These laboratory recordings—including Robert Yerkes's work with North American primate colonies, Yale University's rat-based simulations of human society, and B. F. Skinner's promotions for pigeon-guided missiles—have long been considered passive records of scientific research. In Schultz-Figueroa's incisive analysis, however, they are revealed to be rich historical, political, and aesthetic texts that played a crucial role in American scientific and cultural history—and remain foundational to contemporary conceptions of species, race, identity, and society.

Benjamín Schultz-Figueroa is Assistant Professor of Film Studies at Seattle University.

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