VIOLENT AMERICA: THE MOVIES 1946 - 1964 by Lawrence Alloway. 96 pages; 73 illustrations; clothbound $7.95; paperbound $4.95. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Clothbound edition distributed to the trade by New York Graphic Society Ltd. in the United States and Canada; Transatlantic Book Service Ltd. in the United Kingdom; and Feffer and Simons internationally.

VIOLENT AMERICA: THE MOVIES 1946 - 1964 a study of the American action film by noted art critic Lawrence Alloway, will be published by The Museum of Modern Art on December 13. An important and engrossing addition to the literature of our popular culture, this book focuses on the American action film at its zenith. Mr. Alloway takes into account the usual humanist criticism which treats the "film" as Art and then goes beyond it. Flatly recognizing the "movies" as an art springing from popular culture, he views them in relation to other popular art forms and as part of our entire society, particularly as they contribute to our taste for violence.

The author characterizes popular genres -- for example, gangster movies, the Western, movies about social problems -- as they have developed and influenced one another. He talks about heroes, villains, femmes fatales and the actors who play them. Avoiding the currently popular identification of movies with their directors, Mr. Alloway talks about films which bear the stamp of, say, the producer or the star, as well as those which are clearly team efforts.

Included in the book is an appendix of program notes for the thirty-five films in the series "The American Action Film 1946 - 64," directed by Mr. Alloway at The Museum of Modern Art in the spring of 1969. Among these films are "The Killers" (1946 and 1964 versions), "The Lady from Shanghai," "Kiss Me Deadly," "In a Lonely Place," "Written on the Wind," and "The Manchurian Candidate."

Lawrence Alloway is art critic for The Nation and Professor of Art, State University of New York at Stony Brook. He has taught at Bennington College and from 1962 to 1966...
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