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From the perspective of French Studies in Australia, Andrew McGregor’s book performs a number of functions, perhaps the most useful of which is its reframing of the tension between ‘French’ and ‘Australian’ Studies. Indeed, there is a curious paralleling of the attitude of French reviews of Australian films—by turn enthusiastic and patronizing, but always conscious of the tension between distance and familiarity—and the disciplinary boundaries that perpetuate mythologies of others’ disciplines, which are such that French Studies, deprived federally of its own Field of Research code, is perceived forever as the interloper, be it in Literary Studies, Historical Studies, Curriculum Studies or, in this case, Film and/or Australian Studies. From inside French Studies, *Film Criticism as Cultural Fantasy* forces readers to reflect on the various ways in which French cultural perspectives function according to a pre-determined, and seemingly inevitable, pattern of knee-jerk comparisons: to name but a few examples that spring readily to mind, Sartre’s *La Nausée* is about contingency and any other reading is unthinkable; Marie Darrieussecq’s story of a woman turning into a pig can only be understood through Ovid and Kafka; and the *Série Noire* reminds you of Chandler and Hammett, even if you have never read Chandler or Hammett. Here then, the references to kangaroos that abound (the pun here is McGregor’s [p. 221] and works better in the book) in French reviews of Australian film are, at least to a degree, a logical extension of a profoundly French attitude to Otherness and defence of state-sanctioned, metaphysical ‘Meaning’. Such theorization of national constructions of the Other is developed interestingly in the first three chapters of the book, which is written from the outset with a light touch and clear erudition. These opening chapters, which keep to the point and span only 25 pages, serve to set up this idea of perpetual re-discovery; they also debunk one of the most enduring French myths of Australian cinema, which is that of its youth (McGregor reminds readers that Australia was a powerhouse of cinema’s early years). These opening chapters function, too, as a kind of liminal space between French Studies and Australian Studies: what follows is a detailed, but again highly readable, history of Australian cinema, albeit one mapped against the Cannes film festival and a who’s who of French reviewers. While readers attracted to the book by the promise of an investigation of cultural fantasy and the development of national myth overseas may well be disappointed by the way that the book’s chronological, and comprehensive, structure tends to work against a clear categorization or analysis of the fantasy itself—its evolution, its power to re-/de-construct Australian identity—they will certainly be seduced by this ‘other’ angle on Australian cinema and by a story of this cinema that is in itself fascinating. For, in literature as in film, on beach towels as on the flags in suburban gardens, there is something particularly self-referential about Australian national identity, and McGregor’s French (Studies) approach proves an intriguing (surprising but also logical) way of putting this into a perspective that is both other and familiar.