

# Fuller to publish books on popular film



Dr. Linda K. Fuller, 5 times an author

photo by Raymond Ford

by CHRISTINE PASZUK  
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Dr. Linda K. Fuller of the Worcester State College media department will have a total of five books published by next spring.

Currently in print are *Beyond the Stars: Stock Characters in American Popular Film* and *Beyond the Stars II: Plot Conventions in American Popular Film*, both edited by Fuller and co-editor Paul Loukides.

Fuller, who teaches Speech and History of Film, came to WSC in 1987. She is enthusiastic about the growing field of film studies.

"There are more and more students majoring in film studies. The field is enlarging," Fuller said.

Fuller has broken new ground in her coverage of the motion picture.

"Most movie books are about movie stars, directors and genres," she said. Fuller wanted to write on topics not always mentioned in most books about films, she added.

*Beyond the Stars* is a multi-volume series. Volume one is about stock characters.

"It concentrates on five specific areas of the stock character [traditional characters who are not the stars]. For example, how maids and cops have changed over the years," Fuller said.

Volume two is about plot conventions, incorporating concepts such as the triumph of the underdog, societal implications of marriage and political machinations.

According to a press release describing the book, "plot conventions are, in themselves, indexes of cultural beliefs about the physical and social world and how they should – or must – function. . . . Focus on the birth, evolution, or obsolescence of individual plot conventions helps to reveal the interrelationship between the movements of popular film and changes in American society."

Volume three will examine the material world, exploring the significance of such material possessions as cars and cigarettes; volume four will look at locales in films, and volume five will study ideologies, including essays on Marxism, McCarthyism and feminism.

Fuller has also co-authored a book on overcoming speech anxiety called *Communicating Comfortably*. She will be working on another book during the summer entitled *Communicating Quotably*. This book is in the making, and suggestions from faculty as well as students are welcome, Fuller said.

Her last book, *The Cosby Show: Audience, Impact,*

*Implications*, has taken her the longest to publish because the producers of the show have been very protective of its name.

"The book is a study of the show as a phenomenon. Never before has a black family become so popular," Fuller said.

To write the book, Fuller surveyed people from two dozen countries around the world.

*The Cosby Show* cut across age, gender, race and socio-economic lines. It was a true phenomenon of the 1980s," Fuller said.

*The Cosby Show* is ending its final season; the last show was taped on March 7.

"The show broke television history in ratings, syndication and awards. The show is being replaced by 'slob-coms' ['The Simpsons,' 'Married with Children']," Fuller said.

Fuller is also working on a book about community television. "There are 2,000 communities in the country involved in local community television, including Worcester. It is the one source of media we all have access to," Fuller said.

*Layout and Design Editor Thom Barbour contributed to this article.*