Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
1. The American Dream, Upward Mobility,	
and Hollywood Film	1
The American Language of Class	5
Understanding the Resiliency of the American Dream	6
Defining the American Dream	6
The American Dream, the Self, and Hollywood's	
Contemporary Era	7
Rhetorical Assessment of Filmic Value Systems	9
Rhetorical Analyses of the American Dream in	
Popular Culture	11
The Themes of Upward Mobility in Contemporary	
Hollywood Cinema	12
2. Moralizing Mobility	14
(Working Girl	14
An Officer and a Gentleman	24
Flashdance	31
Saturday Night Fever	36
The Enduring Nature of the American Dream	40
Moralizing Mobility	42
Working-Class Heroes and the Working-Class Life	43

3. Moralizing Failure	44
Wall Street	45
The Firm	50
Someone to Watch Over Me	53
The Flamingo Kid	57
Breaking Away	62
Maid in Manhattan	67
Good Will Hunting	77
⊀ The Morality of Failed Mobility	83
Class Acceptance	85
4. Moralizing the Material	87
* Pretty Woman	89
Mrs. Winterbourne	98
White Palace	103
Titanic	106
Passion Fish	110
The Fisher King	115
Y The Rhetoric of Cross-Class Relationships	121
5. The American Dream and Contemporary	
Hollywood Cinema	126
Analysis of Conclusions	131
The American Dream Is Sacrosanct	132
The Dominant Class Is Not Immoral or Exploitative	133
Working-Class Values Are Lauded	135
Class Is Not Social in America, It Is Individual	138
Social Justice	139
The Problem of Political Indifference	144
A Critical Media Pedagogy	146
A Final Movie	150
Bibliography	152
Index	161