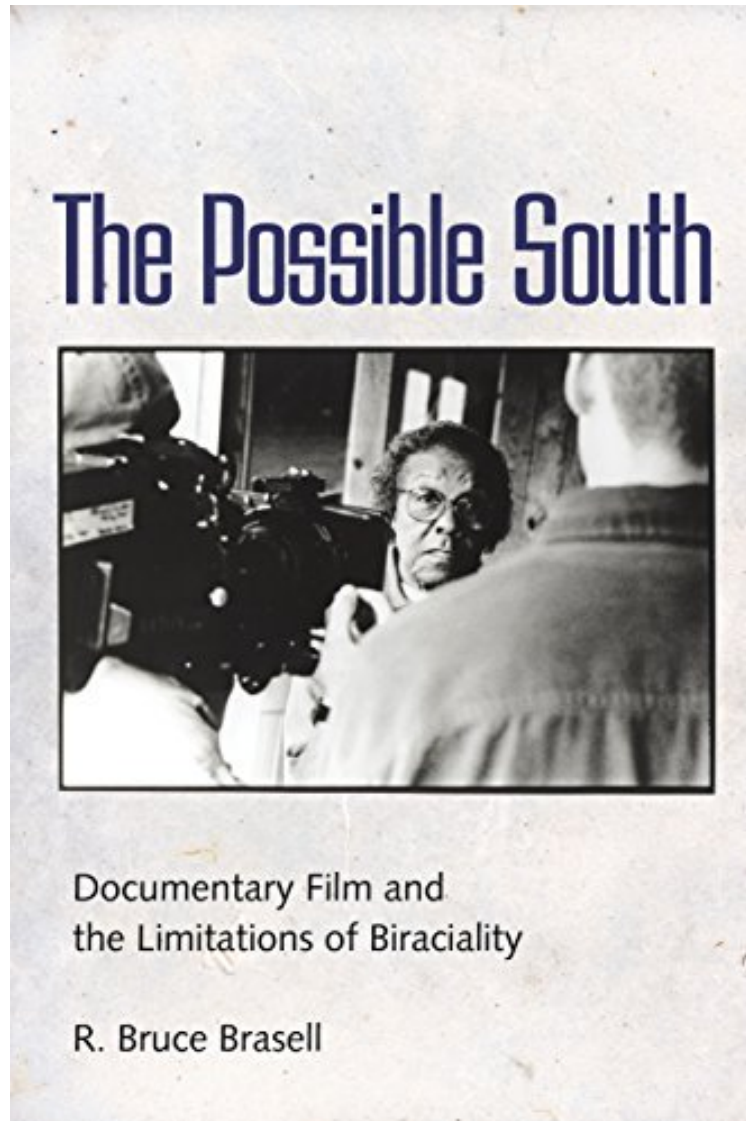


[FREE] The Possible South: Documentary Film and the Limitations of Biraciality

## The Possible South: Documentary Film and the Limitations of Biraciality

*R. Bruce Brasell*

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**R. Bruce Brasell : The Possible South: Documentary Film and the Limitations of Biraciality** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Possible South: Documentary Film and the Limitations of Biraciality:

Using cultural theory, author R. Bruce Brasell investigates issues surrounding the discursive presentation of the American South as biracial and explores its manifestation in documentary films, including such works as *Tell about the South*, *broken/ground*, and *Family Name*. After considering the emergence of the region's biraciality through a consideration of the concepts of racial citizenry and racial performativity, Brasell examines two problems associated with this framework. First, the framework assumes racial purity, and, second, it assumes that two races exist. In other words, biraciality enacts two denials, first, the existence of miscegenation in the region and, second, the existence of other races and ethnicities. Brasell considers bodily miscegenation, discussing the racial closet and the southeastern expatriate road film. Then he examines cultural miscegenation through the lens of racial poaching and 1970s southeastern documentaries that use redemptive ethnography. In the subsequent chapters, using specific documentary films, he considers the racial in-betweenness of Spanish-speaking ethnicities (*Mosquitoes and High Water*, *Living in America*, *Nuestra Comunidad*), probes issues related to the process of racial negotiation experienced by Asian Americans as they seek a racial position beyond the black and white binary (*Mississippi Triangle*), and engages the problem of racial legitimacy confronted by federally non-recognized Native groups as they attempt the same feat (*Real Indian*).

This isn't just the best book ever on southern documentary. It's a theoretically rigorous, conceptually broadening, and wisely skeptical meditation on how race constructs, and is constructed by, our notions of the South. Brasell's argument that diversity is not inherently a challenger to systems of power offers a powerful corrective to many of the recent enthusiasms of both southern and American studies. Jon Smith, associate professor of English, Simon Fraser University

About the Author R. Bruce Brasell, Birmingham, Alabama, has published on film and issues of sexuality, race, and American regionalism in *Cinema Journal*, *Film History*, *Journal of Film Video*, *Film Criticism*, *Jump Cut*, *Wide Angle*, *Mississippi Quarterly*, and several anthologies. He has taught film and media studies at New York University, Sarah Lawrence College, Vassar College, Brooklyn College, Hunter College, and Manhattanville College.