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Raging Bull (1980) — Martin Scorsese's film based on the life of the former middle-weight champ Jake La Motta (played by Robert De Niro) is a biography of the prizefight genre; it's also about movies and about violence, it's about gritty visual rhythm, it's about Brando, it's about the two *Godfather* pictures—it's about Scorsese and De Niro's trying to top what they've done and what everybody else has done. Scorsese puts his unmediated obsessions on the screen, trying to turn raw, pulp power into art by removing it from the particulars of observation and narrative. He loses the

lowlife entertainment values of prizefight films; he aestheticizes pulp and kills it. De Niro put on more than 50 pounds to play the older, drunken La Motta; he seems a swollen puppet. With Cathy Moriarty, whose Vickie La Motta is a beautiful icon—a big, lacquered virgin-doll of the 40s—and Joe Pesci as Joey La Motta. (De Niro won the Academy Award for Best Actor.) An Irwin Winkler–Robert Chartoff Production; released by United Artists. b & w (See *Taking It All In.*)