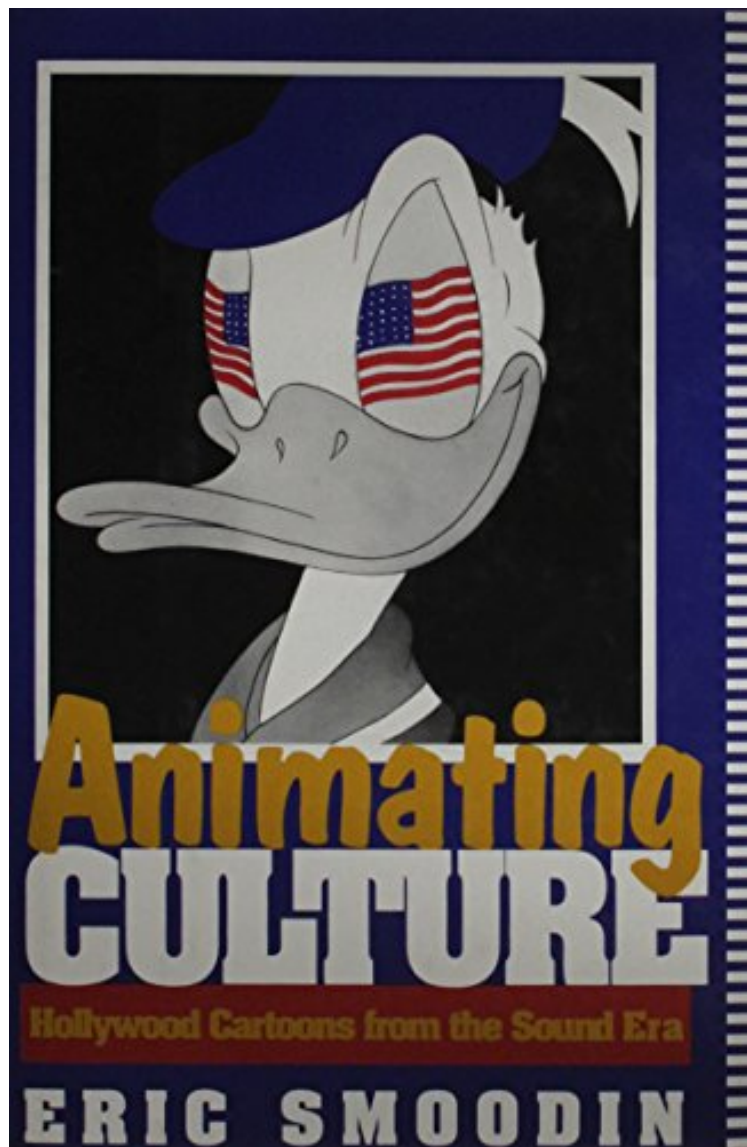


(Pdf free) Animating Culture: Hollywood Cartoons from the Sound Era (Communications, Media, and Culture Series)

Animating Culture: Hollywood Cartoons from the Sound Era (Communications, Media, and Culture Series)

Eric Smoodin

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#4800727 in Books Rutgers University Press 1993-06-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 .87 x 6.26 x 9.311, 1.28 #File Name: 0813519489240 pages | File size: 34.Mb

Eric Smoodin : Animating Culture: Hollywood Cartoons from the Sound Era (Communications, Media, and Culture Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Animating Culture: Hollywood Cartoons from the Sound Era (Communications, Media, and Culture Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Insightful and complexBy klo_dudeIn the last ten years the amount of investigation dedicated to theatrical animation has increased vastly. Since the publication of the seminal works of Leonard Maltin and Michael Barrier, the field of animation research has also now been focused to a wide number of topics: from racism and cultural impact of animation, to the relation of ideology and political control with american cartoons. In that aspect, this book written by Eric Smoodin covers a lot of this controversial themes, that most of the time are neglected while reconstructing the history of animation in the States.Smoodin covers popular cartoon shorts of the Sound Era, from Disney, to Warner Brothers and Fleischer, widening its implications and cultural impact through legal and ideological analysis. So, as you may think, the reading can be difficult and demanding. Smoodin does his analysis on a typical academic style, so although it may not be a "fun read", the amount of research and material covered is still pretty interesting. From legal documents, to posters and other publicity documents, Smoodin tries as hard as it can to prove that his views are objective.The book includes about thirty black and white images, which albeit useless most of the time, helps to make the reading a little more enjoyable. I wouldn't recommend this book to newcomers of animation research, since its complexity can be frustrating at times. It is however, a great investigation that avoids most of the traps of ideological analysis, which in turn, most of the times, can end up becoming paranoid and highly subjective. Smoodin, at the very least, avoids this trap and it shows, through his perspective and passionate writing, that is still someone with a great respect and love for the work of those great animators of the past.

Long considered "children's entertainment" by audiences and popular media, Hollywood animation has received little serious attention. Eric Smoodin's *Animating Culture* is the first and only book to thoroughly analyze the animated short film. Usually running about seven or eight minutes, cartoons were made by major Hollywood studios such as MGM, Warner Bros., and Disney and shown at movie theaters along with a newsreel and a feature-length film. Smoodin explores animated shorts and the system that mass-produced them. How were cartoons exhibited in theaters? How did they tell their stories? Who did they tell them to? What did they say about race, class, and gender? How were cartoons related to the feature films they accompanied on the evening's bill of fare? What were the social functions of cartoon stars like Donald Duck and Minnie Mouse? Smoodin argues that cartoons appealed to a wide audience not just children and did indeed contribute to public debate about political matters. He examines issues often ignored in discussions of animated film such as social control in the U.S. army's "Private Snafu" cartoons, and sexuality and race in the "sites" of Betty Boop's body and the cartoon harem. Smoodin's analysis of the multiple discourses embedded in a variety of cartoons reveals the complex and sometimes contradictory ways that animation dealt with class relations, labor, imperialism, and censorship. His discussion of Disney and the Disney Studio's close ties with the U.S. government forces us to rethink the place of the cartoon in political and cultural life. Smoodin reveals the complex relationship between cartoons and the Hollywood studio system, and between cartoons and their audiences.

From Kirkus SA crisply written academic investigation of the politics of the Hollywood cartoon from roughly 1930 to 1960. Smoodin (English/American University) uses "politics" in the fashionably extended sense to cover such diverse topics as the construction of female sexuality in Betty Boop; the place of cartoon shorts in the design of entertainment programs that also included newsreels, live short subjects, and feature films; the use, for a military audience, of cartoon heroes like Private Snafu "to make any one person's discontent seem aberrant, and to create consensus about U.S. goals during wartime"; the mass media's noncoverage of the 1941 strike at the Disney studio; and the FBI's championing of Walt Disney as an emissary for America even as it was investigating him for possible un-American activities. At times, the range of topics gives the book an air of a miscellany of essays, but its central premise is clear: Cartoons do not simply reflect popular social taste or impose an ideological consensus on their audience but operate within a constantly changing series of social, economic, and political frames. Despite a few comically abrupt descents into academic jargon ("The shift in production...from Betty Boop to Gabby demonstrates the epistemological shift throughout the 30s and early 40s in discourses about the body"), Smoodin generally deploys the insights of recent textual and political film theory without sinking into incoherence. Only his chapter on the politics of programming--in which there turns out to be a political agenda behind every possible relation, including no relation, between cartoon shorts and the features they introduce-- is disappointing. Persuasive support for Smoodin's claim that cartoons--precisely because they are so anonymous and interchangeable compared to the potential masterworks of the Hollywood studios--offer an unrivaled field to study the shifting fields of force in the entertainment industry. (Thirty bw illustrations) -- Copyright 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.From the Back CoverLong considered "children's entertainment" by audiences and popular media, Hollywood animation has received little serious attention. Eric Smoodin's *Animating Culture* is the first and only book to thoroughly analyze the animated short film. Usually running about seven or eight minutes, cartoons were made by major Hollywood studios - such as MGM, Warner Bros., and Disney - and shown at movie theaters along with a newsreel and a feature-length film. Smoodin explores animated shorts and the system that mass-produced them. How were cartoons exhibited in theaters? How did they tell their stories? Who did they tell them to? What did they say about race, class, and gender? How were cartoons related to the feature films they accompanied on the evening's bill of fare? What were the social functions of cartoon stars like

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