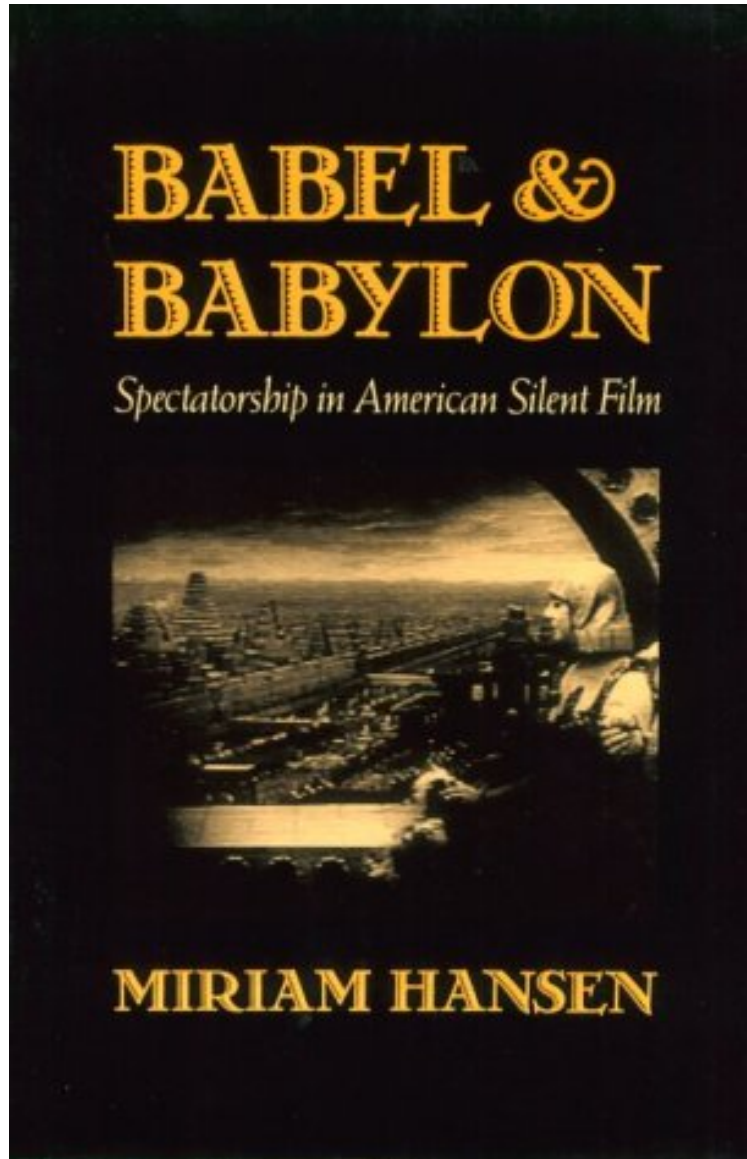


[Read and download] Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film

Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film

Miriam Hansen

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



 Download

 Read Online

#1249732 in Books Harvard University Press 1994-03-15 1994-04-14 Original language: English PDF # 1
9.21 x .80 x 6.14l, 1.26 #File Name: 0674058313390 pages | File size: 41.Mb

Miriam Hansen : Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not just relevant to film By Seaboard Lit Prof As other reviewers have noted, this study is a terrific analysis of how early film could be an open, more interactive medium. But it is

valuable for more than its contribution to the history of film. Hansen combines her study of the history of film with two other areas--1) empirical study of the reception of early film (the opportunities for collective sense-making by populations such as women and new immigrant groups), and 2) theoretical study of the way film changes our ideas about the public sphere. It is the methodological richness of this book that makes it such a powerful work. Readers are offered astute, inventive close readings of films, informed discussions about historical reception, and cutting-edge ideas about what a mass-culture medium like film might mean for our ideas of public reason. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. *Baba baby Sheep, have you any fools?* By Brandon Kader The best understanding of media as we know it to have ever existed. *Diamond of Dimension* has a burr for all comparisons through Hansen's deep analysis of film history and uses a detail oriented approach articulated with extensive maps to create any media empire of your own. Thanks Hansen, I'll be your little huckleberry... 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. *Superb tour-de-force of early cinema* By A Customer While some of the academic language may not be familiar to all readers, this is a superb account of early cinema that bridges the divide between film history and film theory. Hansen's argument that early cinema possessed a fundamentally different model of spectatorship--an interactive and collective one--is lucidly articulated, in addition to being wholly provocative for understanding what it means to go to the movies now. This book altered my sense of my own viewing and moviegoing practices today. An excellent book that discusses film in new ways, *Babel and Babylon* is both an absorbing and a fascinating reading experience.

Although cinema was invented in the mid-1890s, it was a decade more before the concept of a film spectator emerged. As the cinema began to separate itself from the commercial entertainments in whose context films initially had been shown--vaudeville, dime museums, fairgrounds--a particular concept of its spectator was developed on the level of film style, as a means of predicting the reception of films on a mass scale. In *Babel and Babylon*, Miriam Hansen offers an original perspective on American film by tying the emergence of spectatorship to the historical transformation of the public sphere. Hansen builds a critical framework for understanding the cultural formation of spectatorship, drawing on the Frankfurt Schools debates on mass culture and the public sphere. Focusing on exemplary moments in the American silent era, she explains how the concept of the spectator evolved as a crucial part of the classical Hollywood paradigms one of the new industry's strategies to integrate ethnically, socially, and sexually differentiated audiences into a modern culture of consumption. In this process, Hansen argues, the cinema might also have provided the conditions of an alternative public sphere for particular social groups, such as recent immigrants and women, by furnishing an intersubjective context in which they could recognize fragments of their own experience. After tracing the emergence of spectatorship as an institution, Hansen pursues the question of reception through detailed readings of a single film, D. W. Griffith's *Intolerance* (1916), and of the cult surrounding a single star, Rudolph Valentino. In each case the classical construction of spectatorship is complicated by factors of gender and sexuality, crystallizing around the fear and desire of the female consumer. *Babel and Babylon* recasts the debate on early American cinema and by implication on American film as a whole. It is a model study in the field of cinema studies, mediating the concerns of recent film theory with those of recent film history.

Babel and Babylon is a far-reaching book that leads us to new questions about history and theory. It amply proves that early cinema can be one of the most intriguing and productive domains of film study today. (Dana Polan *Film Criticism*) A bold and strikingly original exploration... Hansen has produced a work that has revolutionized the concept of spectatorship in American silent film and that will be an essential tool for historians and film scholars alike. (Leslie Fishbein *American Historical*) An innovative look at the role and impact of class and gender, Hansen's work significantly realigns many of the issues that have traditionally dominated the study of American silent film. (Edward D. C. Campbell, Jr. *Journal of American History*) A brilliant study of silent cinema, characterized by meticulous historical scholarship and rigorous and illuminating textual analyses... A work of the first importance in the wider debates about the nature of cultural production and consumption and about texts and reception... This book is a model of what cultural studies ought to be. (Richard Dyer *University of Warwick*) Hansen's expansive, detailed, and exceptionally erudite study assesses key instances when cinema spectatorship opened up the possibility of articulating the contradictions of female experience. (Constance Balides *Signs*) A brilliant study of silent cinema, characterized by meticulous historical scholarship and rigorous and illuminating textual analyses... A work of the first importance in the wider debates about the nature of cultural production and consumption and about texts and reception... This book is a model of what cultural studies ought to be. (Richard Dyer *University of Warwick*) From the Back Cover In this book, the author approaches the question of spectatorship from the perspective of the public sphere, as a critical concept that is itself a category of historical transformation.