

Cinema Censorship And Sexuality 1909-1925: An Insight into the Past

In the early 20th century, cinema emerged as a powerful medium of entertainment, provoking discussions around moral values and sexuality. This article delves into the era of cinema censorship between 1909 and 1925, exploring how it shaped the representation and perception of sexuality in movies. Through a lens provided by Routledge Revivals, we'll embark on a journey through time, examining how societal norms, moral panics, and legal regulations collided and evolved during this fascinating period in cinematic history.

The Rise of the Silver Screen

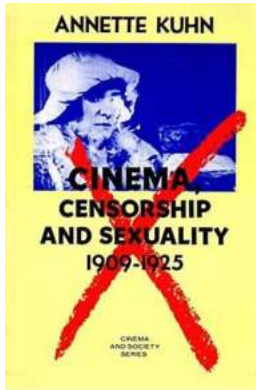
Movies were still in their infancy in the early 1900s, yet they quickly garnered immense popularity across the globe. As cinema gained momentum, it began depicting various aspects of human life, including topics to do with intimacy, relationships, and sexuality. However, the representation of such subjects was far from straightforward. Concerns arose as society grappled with what was considered acceptable on screen.

It is essential to remember that the early days of cinema were marked by a lack of standardized regulations. Filmmakers had the leeway to portray sexuality to varying extents, leading to both outrage and intrigue among the audience. As censorship became necessary, organizations and governmental bodies assumed the role of gatekeepers to ensure that films aligned with societal norms.

Cinema, Censorship and Sexuality 1909-1925 (Routledge Revivals)

by Annette Kuhn (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5



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Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
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Print length	: 156 pages



Moral Panics and Public Outcry

During the period under study, there were numerous instances of moral panics and public outcry surrounding sexually suggestive films. Scenes hinting at pre-marital relationships, extramarital affairs, and same-sex encounters often provoked heated debates. The moral sensibilities of individuals clashed with the newfound freedom that cinema offered.

One of the most notable controversies of this time was the 1915 film "The Cheat," directed by Cecil B. DeMille. Portraying an extra-marital affair, the movie triggered strong reactions around the world, leading to extensive censorship. Such instances exemplified the struggle between artistic expression and societal norms.

The of Censorship Boards

To curb the perceived deterioration of moral values, governmental bodies introduced censorship boards. These boards consisted of individuals responsible for reviewing films and determining whether they adhered to societal standards. Under the pretense of protecting the sanctity of family values and the influence of films on impressionable minds, strict guidelines were implemented.

In the United States, the National Board of Censorship took charge in 1909. Its primary responsibility was to ensure that films shown to the public were morally acceptable. With the of censorship boards, the content of movies underwent significant changes. Filmmakers had to navigate through a web of regulations, tiptoeing around sensitive subjects.

Evolution and Change

As time went by, societal attitudes towards sexuality and cinema began to evolve. The 1920s witnessed significant changes, particularly in Europe and the United States. The of new cinematic techniques and more liberal perspectives led to more explicit portrayals of sexuality on screen.

One notable example is the 1922 film "Moulin Rouge," directed by E.A. Dupont. This German silent film was known for its provocative and sensual scenes, which, although controversial, demonstrated a shift in the boundaries of acceptability. Audiences were willing to engage with such portrayals, indicating a growing acceptance of sexuality in cinema.

Routledge Revivals: Shedding Light on the Past

Through their valuable publications, Routledge Revivals provides us with the opportunity to analyze historical events and gain insights into the socio-cultural aspects of cinema. Their reprints and digital editions of important works from the past contribute to a better understanding of the cultural context that shaped the film industry.

Their collection of books on cinema censorship and sexuality during the years 1909-1925 offers a wealth of information. Authors, researchers, and enthusiasts alike can delve into the various perspectives that were prevalent during that time,

shedding light on the challenges faced by filmmakers and the impact on societal attitudes.

The Legacy of Cinema Censorship

The censorship of the early 20th century ultimately left a lasting impact on the film industry. As regulations were imposed and societal norms shaped the content of movies, it sparked ongoing debates about freedom of expression, artistic integrity, and the role of cinema in reflecting and challenging the values of society.

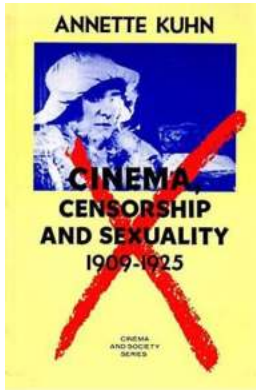
By understanding the history of cinema censorship and sexuality between 1909 and 1925, we can gain valuable insights into the development of the medium and the struggles encountered along the way. The legacy of this period remains embedded in the cultural fabric of the film industry, reminding us of the complexities surrounding the representation of sexuality even today.

In

The period between 1909 and 1925 marked a critical juncture in the history of cinema and its portrayal of sexuality. As cinema censorship evolved, societal norms clashed with artistic expression, leading to controversies, moral panics, and legal regulations.

Exploring this era invites us to reflect on the challenges faced by filmmakers of the past, as well as the influence of censorship on current cinematic practices. Thanks to Routledge Revivals, we can revisit this crucial time in cinematic history and gain a better understanding of the struggles and developments that shaped the film industry.

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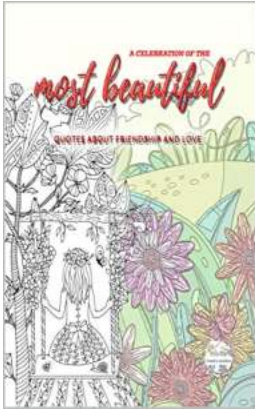


First published in 1988. This book shows how censorship as a set of institutions, practices and discourses was involved in the struggle over the nature of cinema in the early twentieth century. It also reveals the part played in this struggle by other institutions, practices and discourses — for example ‘new’ knowledge about sexuality and organisations devoted to the promotion of public morality. Instead of censorship simply being an act of prohibition by a special institution, this work reveals the issues at work were far more complex and contradictory — opening up critical scrutiny and challenging assumptions. This title will be of interest to students of media and film studies.



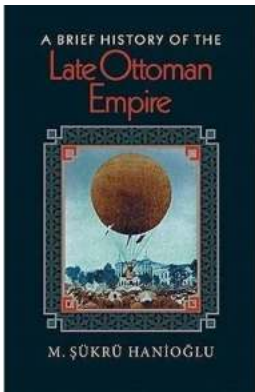
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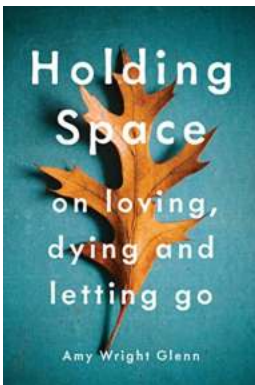
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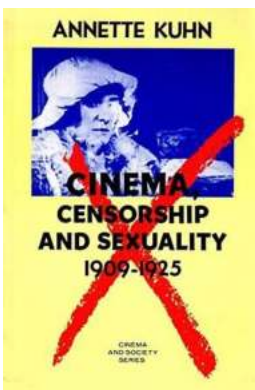
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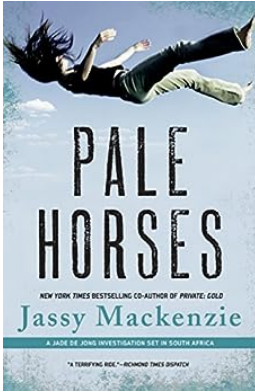
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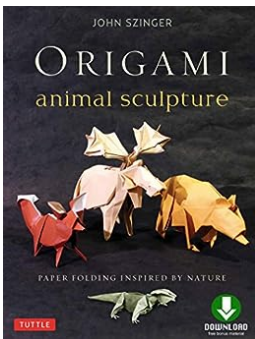
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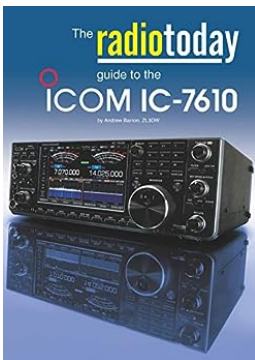
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