

The treatment of modern underground spaces is deserving of further analysis, but Pike's views of the material and metaphorical representations of the city from above and below have at least shown us a possible means of navigating the subject.

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Reference

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Now Playing: Early Moviegoing and the Regulation of Fun

Paul S. Moore, 2008

New York: State University of New York Press
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The rapid world-wide spread of the cinema in the second half of the 1890s has not ceased to amaze and enthral latter-day observers, even more than a century after the phenomenon first appeared in Paris in 1895. Recent scholarship on the early cinema has shown that, although this was arguably the first ever truly global mass entertainment medium, responses to its supposed opportunities and threats were usually highly localised. From Mumbai to Sydney, from Cape Town to Hong Kong, the early experience of the cinema was one of entrepreneurial vaudevillians setting up in vacant shop units, of excited audiences, of creeping censorship and of safety regulation. Nowadays, with 'globalisation' a buzzword seemingly applied to nearly every area of human endeavour, the problematic dialectic between *the global*, on the one hand, and *the local*, on the other, continues to assert itself.

The vast majority of books on cinema-going take the form of amateur local histories, written

by enthusiasts nostalgic for the cinema's 'golden age' (usually meaning the 1930s). Sociologist Paul S. Moore, who is an Assistant Professor at Ryerson University in Toronto, has indeed produced a local history—but one that attempts also to be a serious academic study of cinema-going and its regulation in Toronto, a burgeoning industrial and mercantile hub on the shore of Lake Ontario. There, the early development of the cinema happened apparently much like everywhere else in the industrialised world. While much of the book's content gives a sense of *déjà vu* and is written in a decidedly turgid manner—why must some academics insist on making narratives about entertainment soporific?—Moore does provide numerous telling insights and vignettes.

Using Simmel's concept of modernity being experienced by city-dwellers as a maelstrom of hyper stimuli, he examines first the local roots of mass culture in neighbourhood Nickelodeons, set up by showmen amid the burgeoning consumerism and visual chaos of the urban high street. The potential threat of the cinema to law and order is addressed next and, here, Moore observes an intriguing link between

the hazardous nature of celluloid ... [leading] to a more material and mortal problem of spectators panicking as a crowd, the flashpoint of ... the 'social combustibility' of the picture shows (p. 51).

Such a potential connection between nitrate film stock spontaneously erupting into flames and the fear that the cinema could promote moral turpitude and public disorder amongst its audiences is a link that few have made. Moore's subsequent examination of the connection between censorship and safety regulation is fascinating—but Toronto is merely one case study in what was actually an international problem being tackled at a local level.

Sometimes, however, the censor's parochialism appeared foolish, as in the case of Staff Inspector Kennedy who, in the 1900s, headed the Morality Department of the Toronto police force. Kennedy had a particular loathing of any depictions of violence on screen and, inevitably,

his hard-line stance led to the banning of the films of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* in Toronto. Kennedy was quoted in the press stating that

I witnessed a moving picture show of Hamlet written I think by Shakespeare ... That's all very well to say that it's a famous drama, but it doesn't keep it from being a spectacle of violence (p. 142).

Kennedy's moralistic outrage was apparently matched only by his ignorance—leading the reader to surmise that the early cinema did indeed have an important educational role to play, no matter the concerns about the pernicious effects of mass culture on society at the time and since.

While Moore is strong on the regulation of the early cinema in Toronto, he pays less attention to the architecture of the theatres themselves, beyond observing that they tended to have show façades and that, increasingly, their design and layout came to be governed by ever more complex safety regulations. That is a shame and a missed opportunity because the illustrations in his book show that these edifices were marvellous *fin de siècle* flights of fancy, decorated in all kinds of fancy dress—from the rococo of *Griffin's Theatorium* to the neo-classical propriety of the *Cosmopolitan*, with its handsome Corinthian portico. Indeed, the experience of early cinema-going was arguably as much about the architecture and decoration of the cinema building as it was about the films projected upon the screen (which were usually short, invariably silent and—unless hand-tinted—in black and white). Alas, such early cinemas were amongst the most ephemeral of modern building types and, very quickly, they were superseded by larger and grander premises. Moore observes that, in the 1900s, the less salubrious and more primitive venues, found in working-class inner-city districts, were subject to apparently more rigorous inspection regimes and their owners were increasingly frequently punished for violations than the newer, larger 'uptown' premises. Was this merely due to social snobbery? Perhaps, even, the more ambitious architectural expression and implied respectability

of the most recent additions to Toronto's burgeoning number of 'movie theatres' positively influenced the city's moral guardians? Either way, the cinema's best years lay ahead and, as Moore shows, in time, the very act of 'going to the movies' became a form of citizenship, fully integrated into the experience of the modern urban condition.

Indeed, for the authorities and for movie-goers in Toronto, it was the outbreak of the First World War which speeded up this trend towards acceptability. At that point, the propagandistic nature of the cinema as a medium by which patriotism and loyalty to the British Empire could be extolled became all too apparent. Writing from his North American viewpoint, Moore's analysis of the filmic image and effects of the Great War in Europe on Canadian audiences in Toronto is fascinating—and, with that, he concludes abruptly.

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Crime and Inequality

Chris Grover, 2008

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The central thesis advanced by Grover in this readable and well-argued text is that crime in the UK cannot be adequately understood unless it is located in its wider socioeconomic context. In particular, the argument that Grover is keen to make is that inequality is a key to appreciating offending behaviour and policy responses by governments. Criminology, therefore, needs to engage much more directly with those "contemporary configurations of welfare policy that is the focus of social policy" (p. 204). In this respect, Grover connects with the recent debates in social policy and criminology over claims that social policy has become increasingly criminalised—or that there are increasing 'entanglements' between