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Tracking King Kong: A Hollywood Icon In World Culture, 2nd Edition (Contemporary Approaches To Film And Media Series)



Synopsis

In *Tracking King Kong* Cynthia Erb charts the cultural significance of the character of King Kong, from the early 1930s, when Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack's classic film *King Kong* was first released, to Peter Jackson's 2005 remake. Although *King Kong* has received much academic attention over the past twenty-five years, the bulk of these analyses deal with the film's human characters rather than Kong himself. In this revised edition of an influential study, Erb argues that *King Kong* is a particular kind of cultural outsider who represents a cross-penetration of American notions of exoticism and monstrosity. *Tracking King Kong* considers problems such as race and gender in the *King Kong* tradition, as well as historical, international, and contemporary audience and fan responses to this classic film and its popular protagonist. Erb begins her examination of *King Kong* in the 1930s, when the original film was produced and released, extending through the 1970s, when the film and its hero reached the height of their cultural visibility in a remake by Dino De Laurentiis, and concluding with a look at Peter Jackson's version in 2005. The book includes a detailed production history of the original 1933 film based on primary historical and archival sources; a genre study examining Kong's relations to horror, jungle adventure, and travel documentary genres; an analysis of Kong's influence on the Japanese film *Godzilla*; and a look at sequels, remakes, and spinoffs related to *King Kong*, such as *Mighty Joe Young*. Erb also analyzes Jackson's remake of *King Kong*, to determine how and why Jackson revised the main character, casting him as a melancholy hero. The revised edition of *Tracking King Kong* updates a groundbreaking study of *King Kong* as the iconic character enters the twenty-first century. Scholars of film and television studies as well as general readers interested in film and popular culture will appreciate this significant volume.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Studies the cultural impact and audience reception of King Kong from the 1933 release of the original film until today.

Cynthia Erb is associate professor of film and English at Wayne State University.

When the film 'King Kong' was first released to the viewing public in 1933 it was the cutting edge of film making technology, with original, riveting, superbly presented subject matter that shocked and thrilled its audiences as few other films in that fledgling industry had yet to do. 'King Kong' became an iconic film against which all of its successors were measured. In "Tracking King Kong: A Hollywood Icon in World Culture", Cynthia Erb (Associate Professor of Film and English, Wayne State University) has written and compiled a seminal work of history and analysis of the original film and its subsequent remake in 1970, as well as films like 'Might Joe Young', and even the Japanese 'Godzilla', as well as a number of other sequels, remakes, and theatrical spin-offs. A work of insight, scholarship, and substance, "Tracking King Kong" is informed, informative, and a highly recommended, core addition to academic library Film Studies history and reference collections.

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