



Gender and the Uncanny in Films of the Weimar Republic (Contemporary Approaches to Film and Media Series)

Anjeana K. Hans

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The Weimar period in Germany was a time of radical change, when the traditions and social hierarchies of Imperial Germany crumbled, and a young, deeply conflicted republic emerged. Modernity brought changes that reached deep into the most personal aspects of life, including a loosening of gender roles that opened up new freedoms and opportunities to women. The screen vamps, garçottes, and New Women in this movie-hungry society came to embody the new image of womanhood: sexually liberated, independent, and—at least to some—deeply threatening. In *Gender and the Uncanny in Films of the Weimar Republic*, author Anjeana K. Hans examines largely forgotten films of Weimar cinema through the lens of their historical moment, contemporary concerns and critiques, and modern film theory to give a nuanced understanding of their significance and their complex interplay between gender, subjectivity, and cinema.

Hans focuses on so-called uncanny films, in which terror lies just under the surface and the emancipated female body becomes the embodiment of a threat repressed. In six chapters she provides a detailed analysis of each film and traces how filmmakers simultaneously celebrate and punish the transgressive women that populate them. Films discussed include *The Eyes of the Mummy* (*Die Augen der Mumie Mâ*, Ernst Lubitsch, 1918), *Uncanny Tales* (*Unheimliche Geschichten*, Richard Oswald, 1919), *Warning Shadows* (*Schatten: Eine nächtliche Halluzination*, Artur Robison, 1923), *The Hands of Orlac* (*Orlacs Hände*, Robert Wiene, 1924), *A Daughter of Destiny* (*Alraune*, Henrik Galeen, 1928), and *Daughter of Evil* (*Alraune*, Richard Oswald, 1930). An introduction contextualizes Weimar cinema within its unique and volatile social setting.

Hans demonstrates that Weimar Germany's conflicting emotions, hopes, and fears played out in that most modern of media, the cinema. Scholars of film and German history will appreciate the intriguing study of *Gender and the Uncanny in Films of the Weimar Republic*.

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