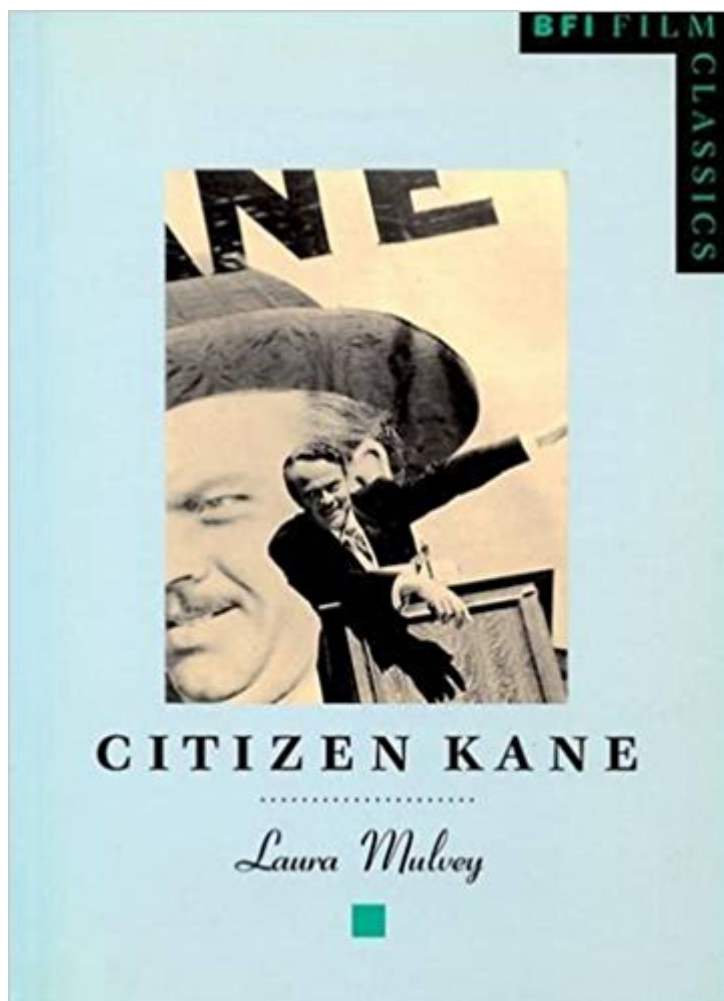


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Citizen Kane (BFI Film Classics)



Synopsis

Citizen Kane's unchallenged reputation as one of the greatest films in all cinema is matched only by the accumulation of critical commentary that surrounds it. What more can there be to say about a masterpiece so universally acknowledged? As Laura Mulvey shows in a fresh and original reading, the richness of the film, both thematically and stylistically, is inexhaustible. In a lucid and perceptive critique she investigates the psychoanalytic structure that underlines the film's presentation of Kane's biography, for once taking seriously what Orson Welles himself disparagingly referred to as "dollar-book Freud." She also illuminates the film's historical context, revealing it to be a prescient commentary on the isolationist politics of prewar America.Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a brilliant introduction to what many consider to be the greatest American film. Critic Laura Mulvey provides new insight into the creative collaboration of screenwriter Herman Mankiewicz, cinematographer Gregg Toland, and writer-director-star Orson Welles. She sheds new light on the relationship between the fictional Kane and the character upon which he is based, legendary newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst. Mulvey is especially sensitive to the way Citizen Kane--and Hearst--negotiated liberal and conservative politics; for her, Kane's psyche mirrors the political unconscious of the United States in the early 1940s. The appendix reprints a press statement by Welles himself in which he describes his reasons for making the film.

Citizen Kane's reputation as one of the greatest films of all time is matched only by the

accumulation of critical commentary that surrounds it. What more can there be to say about a masterpiece so universally acknowledged? Laura Mulvey, in a fresh and original reading, illuminates the richness of the film, both thematically and stylistically, relating it to Welles's political background and its historical context. In a lucid and perceptive critique she also investigates the psychoanalytic structure that underlies the film's presentation of Kane's biography, for once taking seriously what Orson Welles himself disparagingly referred to as 'dollar-book Freud.' Â In her foreword to this special edition, published to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the BFI Film Classics series, Laura Mulvey focuses on the film's politics, highlighting the contemporary 'rhymes' in Kane's portrayal of a scandal-prone press baron in a time of economic crisis. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Thank you!

The second edition includes a new 7 page forward. Otherwise the text is the same.

A first class monograph, perhaps the best thing Laura Mulvey has written.

This Kane Classic book and a separate DVD copy give a great combo to enjoy our tourist trip to the 1%'ers who run this place!!

This book has laid a foundation for understanding the film from a psychoanalytic perspective. The author re-examined the visual style of the film, its narrative structure, the historical context during production and the director's political activities, discovered new facts and finally came to an interpretation in psychoanalytic terms in which all the clues would fall into places. Although some of the arguments were not given in full length and rigidity (there are only 87 pages), this book certainly built a new system of meanings regarding the film that includes many facts discovered in the past several decades.

Nice little bit of analysis. Brought out aspects of the film I had never noticed before. Could have done without all the Freudian interpretation, but I suppose that reflects contemporary literary analysis.

Laura Mulvey writes well, and her analysis of "Citizen Kane" is, in several aspects, a joy to read.

But, for an in-depth coverage of the subject, I really recommend Ronald Gottesman's "Focus on Citizen Kane", or, better yet, his "Perspectives on Citizen Kane", which I think should be required reading on the film, along with Carringer's "The Making of Citizen Kane". In other words, if you needed to read just one book on the subject, this one would not be it.

This is an example of what the BFI classics should hope to attain for each of their forthcoming books. A great insight into the film and the events surrounding it. Praise, I suppose, is due to the fact that there was so much that went on around the making of this film that it would be hard to write a bad book about it.

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