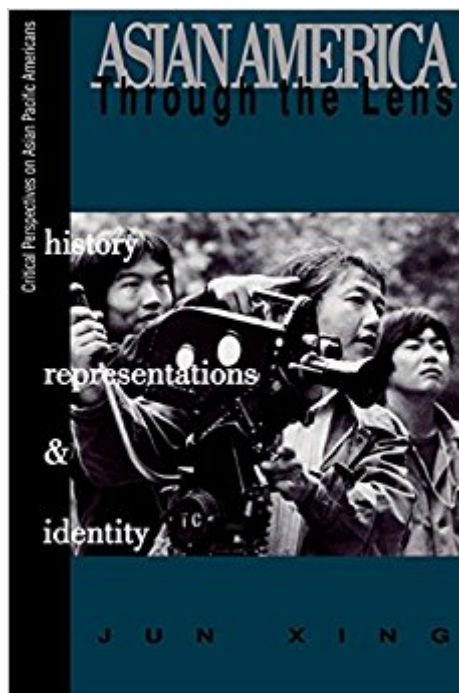




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Asian America Through The Lens: History, Representations, And Identities (Critical Perspectives On Asian Pacific Americans)



Synopsis

While some Asian American films and filmmakers are beginning to achieve acclaim in mainstream U.S. culture, neither academic scholars nor society as a whole has sufficiently taken account of the history of this rich and growing body of cinematic production. In "Asian America Through the Lens", Jun Xing accomplishes the colossal task of surveying Asian American cinema for the first time, allowing its aesthetic, cultural, and political diversity and continuities to emerge. Unique insight into Asian American experience in both mainstream and alternative film production is provided by textual analysis as well as by the voices of filmmakers and actors themselves. With constant attention to the specificities of Asian American histories and cultures, Xing engages a broad range of issues and theoretical perspectives, drawing insight from such bodies of scholarship as African American and Latino film studies, Marxian cultural theory, ethnic studies and the politics of representation, and poststructuralist and feminist discourses.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The sheer growth in number of Asian American independent films over the past few years requires a comprehensive critical survey of the work that is being generated....There is also a rapidly growing body of critical literature on Asian American film that Xing has mastered well and synthesizes for the reader. The author has 'done his homework' by providing an overview of related work on the topic, and in doing so carves out an important niche for his own contribution. His comparative analysis of

the cinema practice of other nondominant groups such as African Americans and Latinos helps greatly in contextualizing Asian American film within the larger framework of marginalization or outright exclusion from the dominant media. (Darrell Y. Hamamoto, University of California, Davis) Combining history, cultural studies, and film criticism, Professor Jun Xing has written a masterful review and analysis of Asian American cinema. Concerned with what goes on behind as well as in front of the camera, he deals with the politics and economics as well as aesthetics of Asian American filmmaking. The work probes the complexity of ethnic identity and the protean character of ethnic representations, posing as many questions as it provides answers. (Rudolph J. Vecoli, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota) The second half of the book is an uncommonly valuable study (and filmography) of Asian Americans in documentaries, family dramas, and experimental films. The fact that only five or six of the films are as popular as Joy Luck Club • most films discussed are 'virtually unknown to the average American' • is both the drawback and the value of this book.... This is a useful guide to worthwhile movies. (P.H. Stacy, University of Hartford CHOICE) It's a pleasure to read such a comprehensive and theoretically adept discussion of the emergence and development of an Asian American cinema practice and its attendant, critical discourses. For Xing's study comes at an opportune moment, since it is really needed in the classroom and the ongoing dialog between academics, critics, spectators, and students currently being generated by Asian American filmmaking. Asian American Through the Lens stands as the first project to cover such a broad critical and historical scope in its interrogation of Asian American cinema. Xing's book, then, makes a significant contribution to the broader multicultural project of 'unthinking Eurocentrism,' while defining the parameters of a vital, emergent cinema. (Ed Guerrero, Cinema Studies, New York University)

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