

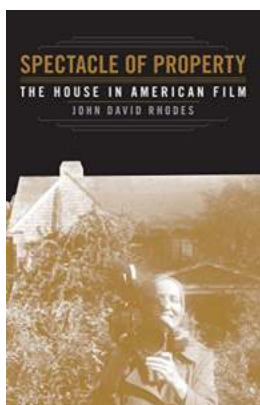
The Fascinating Spectacle of Property: How Houses Shaped American Films

From classic horror films to romantic comedies, American movies have always utilized houses as crucial settings that contribute to the story's atmosphere and character development. The spectacles portrayed in these houses leave a lasting impact on viewers, making them an essential aspect of American cinema.

The Iconic House: A Symbol of Success, Wealth, and Power

Hollywood has long used houses as symbols of success, wealth, and power. Grand mansions, like the famous Xanadu in "Citizen Kane," or Tony Montana's extravagant mansion in "Scarface," showcase opulence and power that capture the imagination of viewers.

These images of luxurious houses create aspirational fantasies for audiences who long to experience grandeur and wealth. The opulence displayed on the screen adds to the allure of these films, giving viewers a sense of vicarious pleasure.



Spectacle of Property: The House in American

Film by John David Rhodes (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 3232 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 288 pages



On the other hand, dilapidated houses, such as the Bates Motel in "Psycho," can be just as captivating. The stark contrast to the grandeur of opulent houses adds to the movie's suspense and provides a chilling sense of unease.

Houses as Characters: Setting the Stage for Drama

Remarkably, houses often become characters themselves in American films, playing an essential role in driving the story forward. The Amityville Horror House, for instance, is central to the plot of the horror franchise, with its haunted presence generating terror and suspense.

"A Nightmare on Elm Street" exploits the uniqueness of the house in which Freddy Krueger haunts his victims. The memorable striped feature walls and eerie interior contribute to the film's chilling atmosphere.

Moreover, houses can symbolize confinement and isolation. Think of the claustrophobic setting of "Rear Window," where the house becomes a prison for the curious protagonist, played by James Stewart.

Architectural Marvels: Captivating the Imagination

The architectural design of houses in American films often becomes a source of awe and inspiration. Take the white stucco mansion in "Meet Me in St. Louis" or the Victorian house in "Hocus Pocus," which have enchanted audiences worldwide.

These visually stunning houses become iconic due to their unique architectural styles and blend of visual elements. The charm they exude transports viewers to different eras and enhances the overall cinematic experience.

Houses and Genre: A Powerful Combination

It's fascinating how houses can play a pivotal role in genre-specific American films. For instance, haunted houses have become the epitome of horror movies, while romantic comedies often feature charming houses that set the stage for love and heartbreak.

The "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" series thrived on the concept of terrifying houses in rural areas, creating a new sub-genre within horror films. The rustic, decaying houses depicted in these movies add to the fear and suspense.

The Economics of Houses on Screen

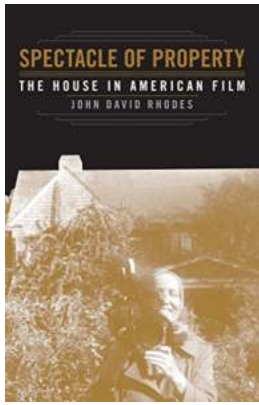
The use of houses in American films is not merely a creative decision; it also has economic implications. Filmmakers often utilize houses as lucrative product placements, effectively promoting real estate properties and architecture.

Establishing a sense of place and space through houses can also be crucial in reinforcing the film's authenticity. By using real houses, filmmakers create a more tangible and believable narrative, adding to the audience's immersive experience.

In

Houses are driving forces in American films, providing awe-inspiring visuals, symbolizing success and power, allowing for character development, and setting the stage for genre-specific narratives. They captivate audiences and leave a lasting impression due to their architectural marvels, unique designs, and strategic placements in the storyline.

Next time you watch an American film, pay attention to the houses on the screen. You'll be surprised by the significant impact they have on your overall cinematic experience.



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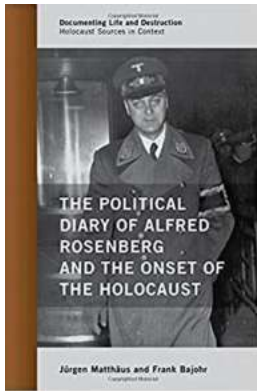
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Much of our time at the movies is spent in other people's homes. Cinema is, after all, often about everyday life. *Spectacle of Property* is the first book to address the question of the ubiquitous conjuncture of the moving image and its domestic architecture. Arguing that in cinema we pay to occupy spaces we cannot occupy, John David Rhodes explores how the house in cinema both structures and criticizes fantasies of property and ownership.

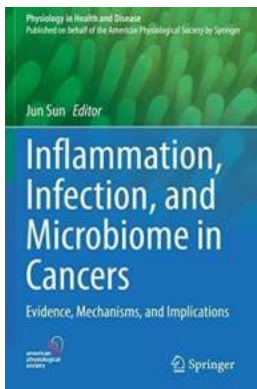
Rhodes tells the story of the ambivalent but powerful pleasure we take in looking at private property onscreen, analyzing the security and ease the house promises along with the horrible anxieties it produces. He begins by laying out a theory of film spectatorship that proposes the concept of the "spectator-tenant," with reference to films such as *Gone with the Wind* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. The book continues with three chapters that are each occupied with a different architectural style and the films that make use of it: the bungalow, the modernist house, and the shingle style house. Rhodes considers a variety of canonical films rarely analyzed side by side, such as *Psycho* in relation to *Grey Gardens* and *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Among the other films discussed are *Meshes of the Afternoon*, *Mildred Pierce*, *A Star Is Born*, *Killer of Sheep*, and *A Single Man*.

Bringing together film history, film theory, and architectural history as no book has to date, *Spectacle of Property* marks a new milestone in examining cinema's relationship to realism while leaving us vastly more informed about, if less at home inside, the houses we occupy at the movies.



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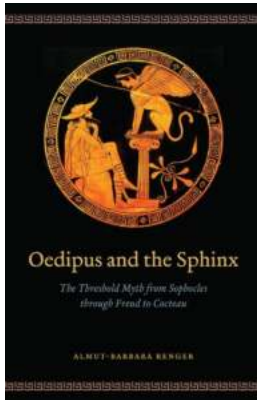
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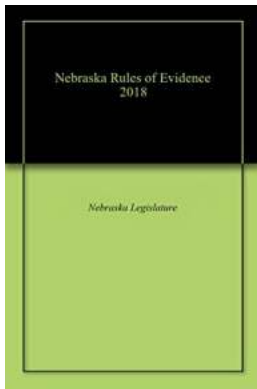
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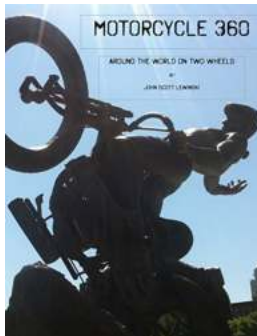
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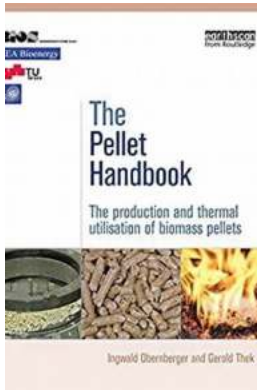
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