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Distorted Images: British National Identity and Film in the 1920s (Cinema & Society)

Kenton Bamford

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Distorted Images: British National Identity and Film in the 1920s (Cinema & Society) Kenton Bamford The 1920s is a neglected period in British film history, yet this is a fascinating period in the cinema when, confronted with audiences' preference for the American cinema of Griffith and deMille, the British cinema-going public was being encouraged to ""buy British."" In this rigorous, illuminating exploration of the cultural construction of ""Britishness"" by the British film industry, Kenton Bamford investigates the image of nation and of British men and women that films projected, the class attitudes and values that underpinned those images, and the realities of the reception of British and American films across classes. Using an exciting array of original source materials, he looks at the culture of the stage and popular fiction on which the cinema fed and demonstrates the stultifying aura of middle-class gentility that stifled creativity, innovation and democracy in British films. He also uncovers some unsung heroes of British cinema, including British star Betty Balfour and director George Pearson.

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