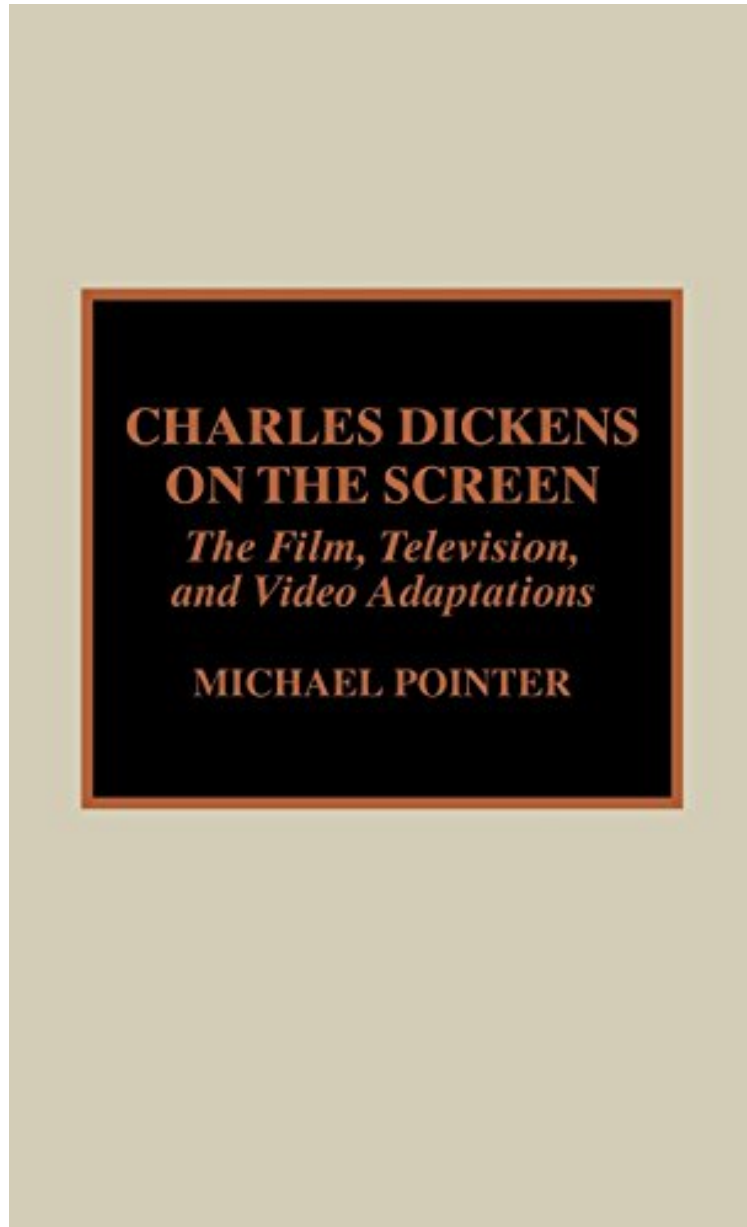


(Library ebook) Charles Dickens on the Screen

Charles Dickens on the Screen

Michael Pointer

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Michael Pointer : Charles Dickens on the Screen before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Charles Dickens on the Screen:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Good Introduction to the World of Filmed DickensBy

T.NAKAJIMA Published in 1996, "Charles Dickens on the Screen" surveys the filmed works of Dickens from the silent era, including TV adaptations. The book is rather slim in volume, and not so much a thorough discussion on the cinematic skills employed on the screen as an introduction to the vast field of Dickensian films (more than 100), but still Michael Pointer keeps his book always readable and immensely interesting. After the brief introduction, the book begins with a discussion about "Dickensian" elements in original books, and their relations to visual media. The argument at first is a bit too general and obvious, but you should just read on. After the third chapter the writer speeds up his discussion, giving well-researched comments on the films, backed up quotations from various materials. Though the materials might not look rare in the eyes of those who are already versed in film history -- autobiographical writings, contemporary reviews, the synopsis, etc. -- they help those who do not have knowledge on movie history to gain the historical viewpoint to glance back the current of many films. Chapters 2-4 are devoted to discussion on the silent films. It is now a nearly impossible thing to make a perfect survey about this era, because many of the films are lost forever (the reason is explained by the words of director Frank Lloyd in the book), and considering that fact, Mr. Pointer did a very good job, even though the argument often seems to lack in power, relying on second-hand knowledge. But that cannot be helped. After Chapter 5, the discussion is about "talkies," and the book gets better and better as you read. His discussion covers the films until the 1993 "Edwin Drood," and, instead of displaying tedious scene-to-scene analysis which might have done harm to the book by its slow tempo, he gives each film concise summary of its characteristics and his opinions about it, which may disagree with yours, but mostly fair and to the point. Mr. Pointer does not neglect the more recent TV products, and gives fair judgement on them. There is even a section where the author deals with parodies! (such as British cult TV series "Avengers" -- remember Mrs. Emma Peel?) The book also contains a list of films (until BBC's "Martin Chuzzlewit"), which is now superseded by our internet source like IMDb. Of more interest is the cluster of clear stills (21 in all) which includes a rare one that shows Charles Laughton as Mr. Micawber in the 1935 "David Copperfield." After one-week shooting, he left the film, and as you know, W.C. Fields took the part. Though not a perfect book, since so many have been released after its publication, "Charles Dickens on the Screen" is a good book to know more about the area of filmed classics, which should be given more attention from both academic and non-academic people.

This comprehensive survey of the screen adaptations of the works of the great author covers film worldwide, television, and video dramatizations from 1897 to 1993. While it provides a critical commentary on all noteworthy productions, Charles Dickens on the Screen also contains a catalog of more than 130 movies and 220 TV presentations with cast lists and production credits, and includes many hitherto unrecorded borrowings, spoofs, and satires from the famous stories. Pointer examines the problems inherent in dramatizing Dickens' novels for the screen, and traces the development of the adaptations from tiny extracts in the earliest silent movies to the full-scale television serials of the present day, covering virtually a century of international productions.

A lively and comprehensive survey of the many attempts throughout the world to translate Dickens's novels to large and small screens... (Nineteenth-Century Literature) This is no dull chronology. Pointer is a writer of verve and vitality who is both a Dickens scholar and a film historian. His narrative is full of interesting historical detail and astute critical commentary... a fine reference book and, for those interested in film history, an interesting read. (Arba)... performs its scholarly service well... tell[s] us is everything we ever wanted to know and more about filmed adaptations of Dickens... an invaluable resource. (Dickens Quarterly)... evaluations are enlightening and fair... a good source for learning how classic literature can be adapted to suit the restrictions of different media and new audiences... (Big Reel)... an engaging and informative text examining a book first published in the holiday season. There is already an excellent general survey of screen adaptations. (Classic Images) Surveys the range of film, television, and video adaptations of Dickens' work, describing obscure and popular productions from the silent film era to the present. (Reference Research Book News) About the Author Michael Pointer has had a lifelong interest in movies, and now concentrates on film and television dramatizations made from famous literature.