

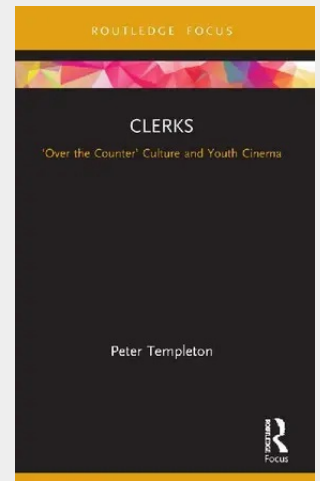
Templeton

Clerks

'Over the Counter' Culture and Youth Cinema

This study of Kevin Smith's debut film breaks new ground by exploring how Clerks sits at the intersection of political and cultural trends relevant to alternative youth cultures in the early 1990s. Clerks (1994) was born of and appeals to a specific youth subculture, with the multimedia 'View Askewniverse' developing out of the film's initial release. Drawing on existing texts and movements such as Richard Linklater's Slacker (1991), Douglas Coupland's novel Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture and alternative rock subcultures that had developed during and since the 1980s, the film presents a comedic take on working as a young person in 1990s America in a manner that was praised for its authenticity. Filmed on a miniscule budget, the roughness of the film's aesthetic, combined with a hard rock soundtrack comprised of mostly independent bands, convinced many that it could speak for young Americans, much more than polished, corporate Hollywood productions. The book situates the film within this wider cultural movement and cultural zeitgeist and explores the role of working-class youth and employment in the years following Reaganomics and its consequences, as well as providing insight into the film's presentation of consumption and of its representation of masculinity and sexuality. Clear, concise and comprehensive, the book is ideal for students, scholars and those with an interest in youth cinema, American independent film, Cult Film, Subcultures and Counterculture, as well as both Film and American Studies more broadly.

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30,80 €

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Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9780367707415

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-0-367-70741-5

Verlag: Routledge

Erscheinungstermin: 31.05.2023

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2023

Serie: Cinema and Youth Cultures

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 162 g

Seiten: 118

Format (B x H): 140 x 216 mm

