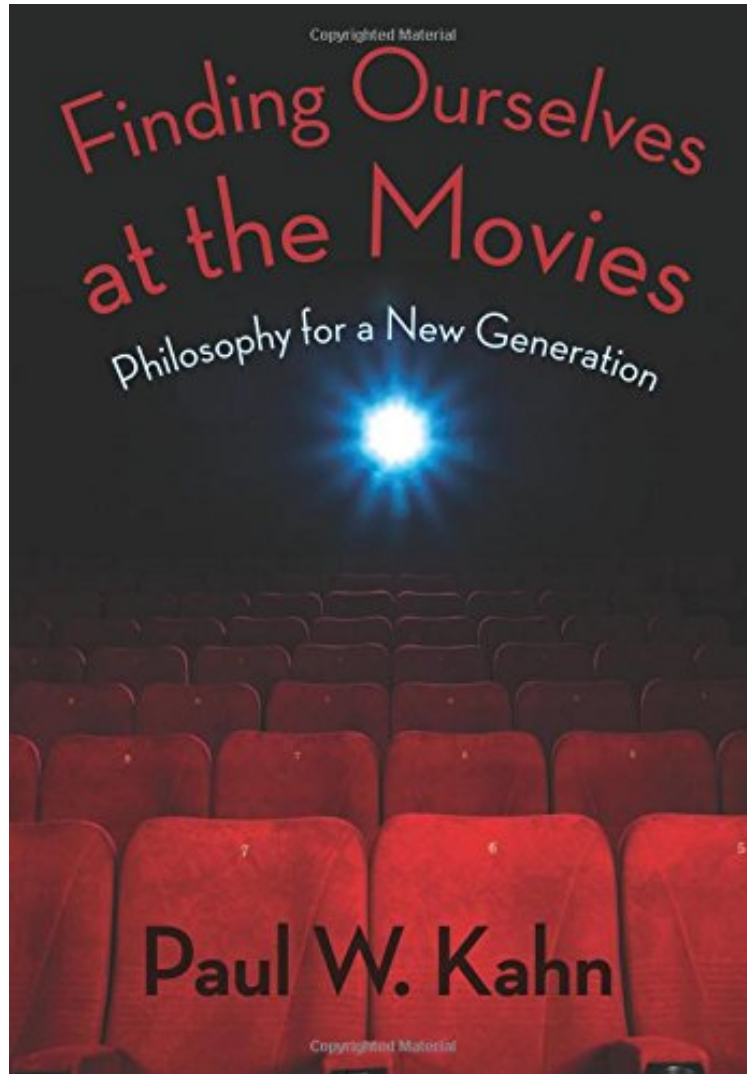


[Free read ebook] Finding Ourselves at the Movies: Philosophy for a New Generation

Finding Ourselves at the Movies: Philosophy for a New Generation

Paul Kahn

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Paul Kahn : Finding Ourselves at the Movies: Philosophy for a New Generation before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Finding Ourselves at the Movies: Philosophy for a New Generation:

Academic philosophy may have lost its audience, but the traditional subjects of philosophy—love, death, justice, knowledge, and faith—remain as compelling as ever. To reach a new generation, Paul W. Kahn argues that philosophy must take up these fundamental concerns as we find them in contemporary culture. He demonstrates how this can be

achieved through a turn to popular film. Discussing such well-known movies as *Forrest Gump* (1994), *The American President* (1995), *The Matrix* (1999), *Memento* (2000), *The History of Violence* (2005), *Gran Torino* (2008), *The Dark Knight* (2008), *The Road* (2009), and *Avatar* (2009), Kahn explores powerful archetypes and their hold on us. His inquiry proceeds in two parts. First, he uses film to explore the nature of action and interpretation, arguing that narrative is the critical concept for understanding both. Second, he explores the narratives of politics, family, and faith as they appear in popular films. Engaging with genres as diverse as romantic comedy, slasher film, and pornography, Kahn explores the social imaginary through which we create and maintain a meaningful world. He finds in popular films a new setting for a philosophical inquiry into the timeless themes of sacrifice, innocence, rebirth, law, and love.

A brilliant venture in the lost art of bringing theoretical insight to bear on popular culture. *Finding Ourselves at the Movies* defends another relationship between the thinker and the public, enacting what it theorizes in illuminating commentaries on films. Kahn makes us reconsider movies as reflections of our collective imagination and public commitments. (Samuel Moyn, Columbia University) This is a terrific book, bursting with ideas, and seamlessly blending discussions of love, war, freedom, faith in short, of the human condition with talk about movies. Drawing on everything from war movies to romantic comedies, from horror films to family dramas, Kahn shows us how the movies mirror the ways we communally invest our lives and our world with meaning. His readings of popular films and the shared world these films reflect are at once astute and provocative. (Susan Wolf, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) What an astonishing book, a marriage between film and philosophy written without pretension or technical language. Fifty years ago, Pauline Kael famously 'lost it at the movies'; now Paul Kahn has found it. Film, Kahn explains, is not just about losing your innocence, it is about finding your 'self' and that is and always has been the project of philosophy. You may not agree with Kahn's interpretation of particular films, but you will always be enlightened. (Alan A. Stone, Harvard University) Writing with wisdom and philosophical insight, Kahn seeks to reclaim for philosophy the task of helping us discover who we are. Drawing on the narratives compellingly depicted in movies, he helps us reclaim our ability to act as intelligent agents. The humanity that pervades this book makes what Kahn has done significant for anyone who continues to hope that what we are and do matters. (Stanley Hauerwas, Duke Divinity School) Informed, thought-provoking, and insightful. (Midwest Book) Crisply document[s] and provide[s] a provocative theoretical account of an important feature of America's distinctiveness. (Mark S. Weiner Telos) [*Finding Ourselves at the Movies*] is rich, thought provoking, and will inspire much further discussion. [Kahn] has written a book that is both sophisticated in its philosophical argument and accessible to an intelligent, non-specialist readership. (Notre Dame Philosophical) Kahn's work is rich, thought provoking, and will inspire much further discussion.... *Finding Ourselves at the Movies* will be of keen interest to scholars working in the field of film and philosophy, and constitutes a valuable addition to this area of scholarship. (Sarah Cooper Notre Dame Philosophical s) With ease and clarity, Kahn effectively calls nonprofessional audiences' attention to the role of philosophy in examining our struggle with identity and its engagement with the lived experiences. (Mi Young Park Journal of Popular Culture) A thoughtful and often thought-provoking book. (Tony McKibbin Senses of Cinema) A valuable read. (Nicole Talmacs Media International Australia) About the Author Paul W. Kahn is Robert W. Winner Professor of Law and the Humanities and director of the Orville H. Schell Jr. Center for Human Rights at Yale Law School. He is the author of many books, including *Sacred Violence: Torture, Terror, and Sovereignty* and *Political Theology: Four New Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*.