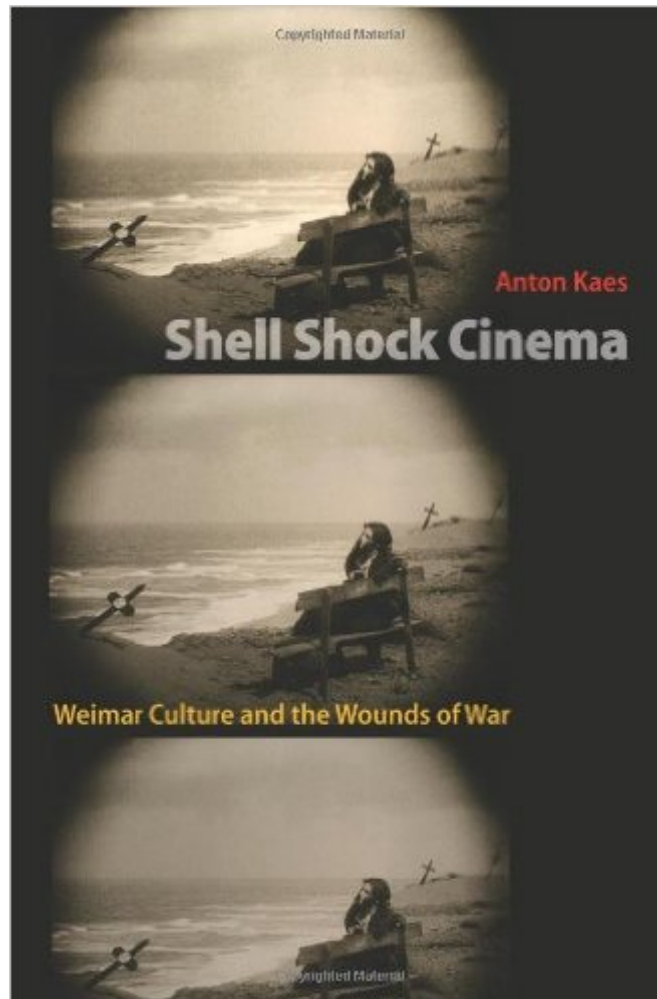


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# Shell Shock Cinema: Weimar Culture And The Wounds Of War



## Synopsis

Shell Shock Cinema explores how the classical German cinema of the Weimar Republic was haunted by the horrors of World War I and the devastating effects of the nation's defeat. In this exciting new book, Anton Kaes argues that masterworks such as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *Nosferatu*, *The Nibelungen*, and *Metropolis*, even though they do not depict battle scenes or soldiers in combat, engaged the war and registered its tragic aftermath. These films reveal a wounded nation in post-traumatic shock, reeling from a devastating defeat that it never officially acknowledged, let alone accepted. Kaes uses the term "shell shock"--coined during World War I to describe soldiers suffering from nervous breakdowns--as a metaphor for the psychological wounds that found expression in Weimar cinema. Directors like Robert Wiene, F. W. Murnau, and Fritz Lang portrayed paranoia, panic, and fear of invasion in films peopled with serial killers, mad scientists, and troubled young men. Combining original close textual analysis with extensive archival research, Kaes shows how this post-traumatic cinema of shell shock transformed extreme psychological states into visual expression; how it pushed the limits of cinematic representation with its fragmented story lines, distorted perspectives, and stark lighting; and how it helped create a modernist film language that anticipated film noir and remains incredibly influential today. A compelling contribution to the cultural history of trauma, *Shell Shock Cinema* exposes how German film gave expression to the loss and acute grief that lay behind Weimar's sleek façade.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Excellent, innovative, clearly argued, a must for Weimar cinema scholars and students. Kaes

demonstrates his claim that film serves a society as a medium to come to terms with its "dark sides," conflicts, and desires.

This is an excellently written book - persuasively argued and highly accessible, both to academic and non-academics. Makes a great reading assignment for a college film course.

The novel is great. Well written. However, if you are buying the e-book for school, don't. It doesn't give you the page numbers so citations are impossible.

Extremely insightful

This is a fascinating book, one of many, by a brilliant author and professor. Anyone interested in the Weimar Era and especially the cinema of that time should have it!

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