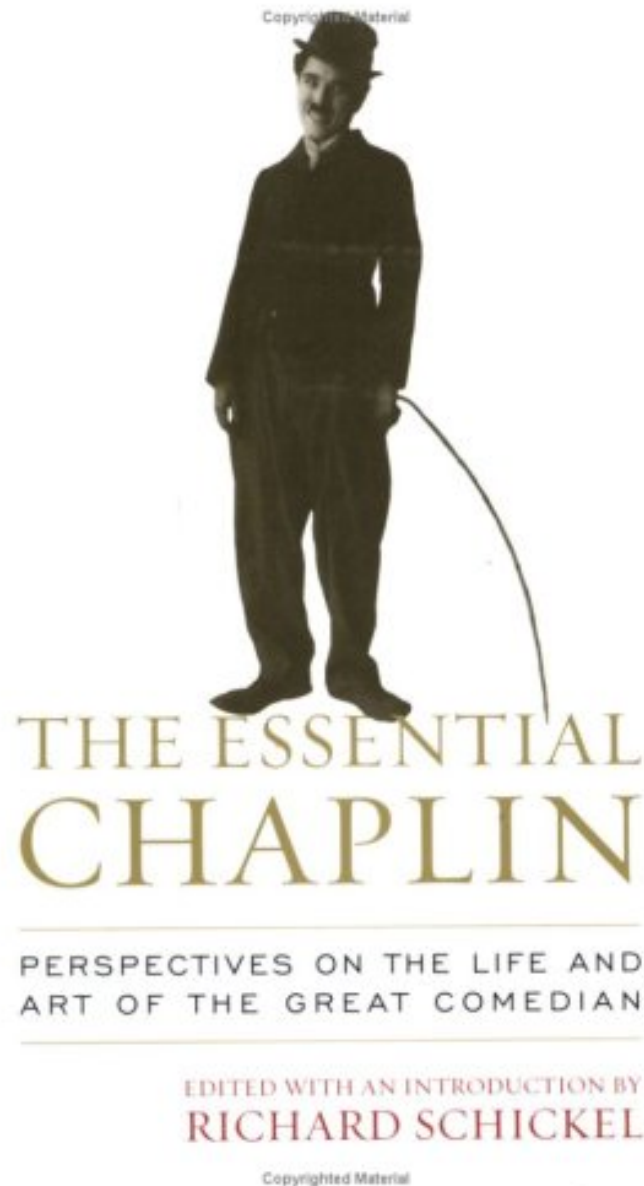


(Free download) The Essential Chaplin: Perspectives on the Life and Art of the Great Comedian

The Essential Chaplin: Perspectives on the Life and Art of the Great Comedian

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From Brand: Ivan R. Dee : The Essential Chaplin: Perspectives on the Life and Art of the Great Comedian before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Essential Chaplin: Perspectives on the Life and Art of the Great Comedian:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Essential Chaplin is essential reading for fans of the little fellow, tramp, genius of the cinema! By C. M. Mills Charles Spencer Chaplin has had millions of words written about his long life and spectacular career. Chaplin (1889-Christmas Day, 1977) was born in London in the same month that the evil dictator Adolf Hitler was born in Austria. What different paths these two mustached men took in their life careers! Chaplin was the son of a music hall comic who left the family when Charlie was an infant. The father was alcoholic and his mother was insane. One of the 33 essays in the book reveals that Chaplin's mother may have been suffering from tertiary syphilis leading to her confinement in a mental institution. Charlie had a half brother Sydney who was close to the world-famed comedian. Charlie left the Fred Keno Show on a US tour to become the most famous screen actor in the world. Some of his best movies were "City Lights", "The Circus", "The Great Dictator", "Modern Times", "The Kid", "City Lights" and lesser but still fine later films: "Monsieur Verdoux" and his final film "Limelight" (largely autobiographical). Chaplin was the Dickens of comedy and motion on screen. Charlie was short, thin and could do amazing things with his body. His mother had been a ballerina and he displayed incredible agility. His best films were made before he was 30 years old. He hobnobbed with the rich and famous such as Winston Churchill (who has an essay in the book); Alastair Cooke (who has a very good look at Chaplin in one of the book's longest and best essays); George Bernard Shaw, Herbert George Wells and the stars of stage and screen. Charlie slept with thousands of nubile young women. He was married three times to Mildred Harris, Lita Grey and Oona O'Neill (the daughter of Eugene O'Neill). He had several children and grandchildren. Chaplin left America due to the McCarthy charges he was a communist to enjoy a long retirement in Switzerland. He returned to Los Angeles to receive an honorary Oscar on his 83rd birthday. Richard Schickel, the outstanding film critic of Time magazine, has edited this fine book. The volume could well be used in film classes. Some of the reviewers disagree with one another. An example would be James Agee's praise of "Monsieur Verdoux" while Dwight McDonald thought the film about a serial wife killer was a poor effort by Chaplin. The book is a good place to start if you have never read anything about the man who was the most famous movie star from the teens to the late 30s of the twentieth century. Chaplin was a deeply flawed human being who bore scars from his Oliver Twist childhood of poverty, despair and hunger. He will, however, live for all time on the silver screen. This is a good book on a man who was the first victim of celebrity culture who has brought countless pleasures to millions by his comedic genius.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Chaplin book for my theatre library By Wyoming resident As a theatre person, I have always loved Charlie Chaplin. I have always wanted a copy of this book for my theatre library. Came in great shape at the appointed delivery date.

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. NOT for Chaplin fans! By M. Mara "Essential"? I don't think so unless your idea of an essential perspective is to rip apart Chaplin's films and insult everything about him right down to his so-called "prissy voice" and argue that he was in no way a genius. If you hate Chaplin this is the book for you. Fans of the great Chaplin should not bother with this book. From the Kindle sample, I didn't realize that this was just going to be slamming him and his films page after page. Awful waste of time and money!

At age twenty-eight, Charlie Chaplin was a millionaire and one of the world's most famous personalities. He had grown rich playing the poorest of men. He was to go on playing unforgettable characters in timeless films, but now the psychology of celebrity began both to drive and to damage his creativity. Richard Schickel, the distinguished film critic, has called Chaplin the first victim of modern celebrity culture, driven by his relentless ego, by his helpless need for an audience to dominate, to lead. All the tragedies of his life stemmed from those drives and needs. Mr. Schickel is the rarest of Chaplin enthusiasts, an unabashed fan who can celebrate the object of his affection without looking away when his subject deserves a poking. In this indispensable collection of some thirty essays, he has selected the most provocative and insightful criticisms of Chaplin's life and work, from the great comedian's beginnings through his early features, his mid-life crisis, and his late films. The contributors include Andrew Sarris, David Thomson, Andre Bazin, Gilbert Seldes, Alastair Cooke, Frances Hackett, Robert E. Sherwood, Stark Young, Penelope Gilliatt, Edmund Wilson, Stanley Kauffmann, Alexander Woollcott, George Jean Nathan, Winston Churchill, Max Eastman, Graham Greene, Otis Ferguson, James Agee, Dwight Macdonald, Robert Warshaw, Walter Kerr, J. Hoberman, and others. Mr. Schickel, the last critic to study Chaplin intensively (for his award-winning documentary of a year ago), offers a long Introduction.

From Publishers Weekly Schickel reviews movies for Time, and has an obvious but clear-eyed affection for Chaplin, whom he calls "gallant and plucky and romantic and hopeful" and "the most famous man in the world" in his time. Most of the writers he gathers for this collection were Chaplin's contemporaries and fans, including the critics Edmund Wilson, Alexander Woolcott and Brooks Atkinson. Schickel has unearthed a few rare and notable pieces, including Alastair Cooke's memories of working with Chaplin on a screenplay when Cooke was a young man, and novelist Graham Greene's thoughts on Chaplin's film *Modern Times*. Even Winston Churchill wrote about Chaplin. (Perplexingly, Churchill declares that poverty in America in 1935 was "deliberately chosen, rather than imposed from without.") There are very few bum notes, but one is surely James Agee's histrionic defense of Chaplin's little-liked film (and first talkie), *Monsieur Verdoux*; Andrew Sarris's auteurist take paradoxically comes off much better. In the

main, these 33 essays offer a 20th century-eye view of Chaplin's cultural impact. There's even this, from Theodor Adorno: "He once imitated me, and sure I am one of the few intellectuals to whom this happened and to be able to account for it when it happened." For many theory-minded readers, what follows will be worth the price of admission. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From School Library Journal Adult/High School A fascinating compilation. The range of writers of these 33 selections is amazingly wide, and the whole reads as an overview of professional critics and the evolution of the genre. Among the who's who are Andrew Sarris, Alistair Cooke, Robert E. Sherwood, Alexander Woollcott, Winston Churchill, Graham Greene, and James Agee; several others, such as Sigmund Freud, are quoted. Chaplin made 82 films, and his work is broken up into six categories in this book. For good or bad, every idea in his productions was his own, and he insisted on creating every aspect of his films himself. Most of the criticism that he received in his lifetime, and that he receives here, is that he should have expanded into areas beyond comedy and into more literary and serious films. This pressure caused critics' dissatisfaction with Chaplin's later work, leaving him embittered. For fans, this book is a must; it is also valuable as a study of expository and critical writing. Dana Cobern-Kullman, Luther Burbank Middle School, Burbank, CA Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Seventy years after he last donned the garb of the Tramp, Chaplin remains an icon of cinema. Film critic Schickel, who recently made a documentary on the comedian, has selected 33 pieces, drawn from nearly a century's worth of writing about Chaplin, to neatly sum up his unmatched artistic and cultural effects. The authors include movie critics (Andrew Sarris, Andre Bazin, James Agee, Dwight Macdonald), cultural commentators (Alexander Woollcott, Edmund Wilson, George Jean Nathan), and even Winston Churchill. If many assessments are now of greater historical than critical value, they still demonstrate how Chaplin legitimized the young medium of film in the eyes of cultural gatekeepers. The most fascinating essay is a memoir by Alistair Cooke, who developed a close friendship with Chaplin during two early-1930s summers when Cooke was a tyro journalist. The most valuable, however, may be Schickel's introduction, which encapsulates Chaplin's career and details the deleterious effect of the unprecedented approbation reflected elsewhere in the collection, which led the filmmaker to turn his back on his populist inclinations and overreach artistically. Gordon Flagg Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved