

Penguicon 2014

SILENT ERA FILMS

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[HTTP://WWW.CAFEPRESS.COM/THECOURTJESTER](http://WWW.CAFEPRESS.COM/THECOURTJESTER)

New Perspectives

Pre-sound Movies are historically important

Sophisticated and interesting

As entertaining (more?) than sound films

Show Some Film?

I have some silent shorts

- Harry Langdon
- Harold Lloyd
- Early movies

Why are these films interesting

- Directors/actors had to work hard for subtext/implication (plot and character evolution, for ex.)
- Acting styles are very different
- Early limitations of cinematography.
(stationary cameras, lighting issues, stage/scene inflexibilities)
- Language is less on issue. Translations fit into intertitles.
- You need to focus watching silent films. No distractions.
- Socially/Historically interesting.

Why did I ask for this session?

- I love silent movies. I completely enjoy them.
- I mostly don't watch horror or suspense movies.
- I originally considered that the folks who go to PC would like fantasy and horror films.
- I want to share this great passion.

Actors and Actresses

- Joan Crawford
- Marlene Dietrich
- Gloria Swanson
- Myna Loy
- Zazu Pitts
- Jackie Coogan (Uncle Fester)
- W. C. Fields
- John Gilbert (The movie "the Actor is an unveiled reference to him)
- Paul Robeson (Yes, the singer)
- Harrison Ford is named after a real silent film actor.

Special Effects!

- Silent films had amazing special effects!
The medium of film was only 0-30 years old!
- The old-fashioned way. Required lots of imagination...
 - Fades
 - Double Exposure
 - Iris
 - Actor/Animal Abuse
 - Slow-motion/Speed-up
 - Color

The Originals

Movie comparisons and remakes...

- ❑ Sherlock Holmes (1922)
- ❑ Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1920)
- ❑ Wizard of Oz (1925) with Hardy of Laurel and Hardy
- ❑ Peter Pan (1924)
- ❑ The Phantom of the Opera (1920)
- ❑ Ben Hur (1925)
- ❑ The Hands of Orlac (1924)
- ❑ Robin Hood (1922)

...and many more

Sources

TCM – Silent Sunday (sometimes)

BFI – British Film Institute –
<http://www.bfi.org.uk>

Youtube! – This is a blessing recently. Lots of PD movies are there.

Kino – <http://www.kinolorber.com/video-store.php>

Criterion – <http://www.criterion.com/library>

Flicker Alley – <http://www.flickeralley.com/>

Silent Era –
<http://www.silentera.com/index.html>

American Silent Film – William K. Everson –
1978/1998 0-306-80876-5

The Decline of Sentiment – Lea Jacobs – 2008
– 978-0520-25457-2

100 Silent Films – Bryony Dixon – 2011 978-1-
84457-308-0