



The Fun Factory: The Keystone Film Company and the Emergence of Mass Culture

Rob King

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From its founding in 1912, the short-lived Keystone Film Company—home of the frantic, bumbling Kops and Mack Sennett's Bathing Beauties—made an indelible mark on American popular culture with its high-energy comic shorts. Even as Keystone brought "lowbrow" comic traditions to the screen, the studio played a key role in reformulating those traditions for a new, cross-class audience. In *The Fun Factory*, Rob King explores the dimensions of that process, arguing for a new understanding of working-class cultural practices within early cinematic mass culture. He shows how Keystone fashioned a style of film comedy from the roughhouse humor of cheap theater, pioneering modes of representation that satirized film industry attempts at uplift. Interdisciplinary in its approach, *The Fun Factory* offers a unique studio history that views the changing politics of early film culture through the sociology of laughter.

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