

From Left to Right in the Movies

A Classified List of Who's Who on the Screen

By DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS



Reading from left to right—Douglas Fairbanks

FIRST of all, there's the movie heroine.

She is invariably one of those excruciatingly sweet young things who once saw Mary Pickford and has never been herself since. She walks with the approved Lilian Gish movement, at a pace which would seem to indicate that she is always on her way to a fire. She never sits, in the accepted sense of the word,—she merely takes a running jump at a chair and lands girlishly on all fours, then draws her knees up on a level with her chin and clasps her hands vivaciously around them. Her hair is always worn in curls,—it's the unwritten law of the movies that all heroines, without regard to age, race, color or creed, must wear their hair in curls. So far as movie heroines are concerned, there is no other coiffure.

High white shoes, also, are extremely prevalent among heroines, but these, while important, are not absolutely essential.

The heroine is a marvel of versatility—her press agent says so himself. Versatility, in the movies, means starting the picture (in bare feet and a gingham dress torn in all the interesting places), as little Bessie, the Sunshine of Poverty Alley; in being adopted by a doting millionaire somewhere in the third reel; and playing the last thousand feet of the picture all Luciled up like a Century showgirl.



THE heroine is the reason for the hero's introduction into the scenario. If it weren't for the crying need of someone to play opposite the heroine, all movie heroes would still be running elevators.

The hero is always a dark person with highly polished hair, which is worn in much the same style that Mrs. Vernon Castle wears hers. His taste in clothing runs to belted coats, gracefully plaited across the back—the model popularly known as the 'Varsity, a snappy style for young men and men who want to stay young. He uses those soft felt hats with the college hat-bands—the kind that the owner gets all the girls at the seashore to write their names on, as a souvenir of the two weeks' vacation.

These hats are always selected at least a size and a quarter too small, and are worn rolled dashingly up in back and pulled rakishly down to shade the eyes. The hat is on no account

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hero's costume, except when he is wearing his evening clothes with the jet buttons.

In that event, however, he always retains his white socks.

THE hero's film life may be an eventful one, but there is always a pleasing element of certainty about it. No matter how wrong he may be in, there is the thrill of knowing that everything will be right for him eventually—that, after several fierce hand-to-hand struggles, which the villain evidently doesn't care much about winning, he will always end the reel with one arm around the heroine and the other pointing towards the great West, where their future lies—where the men may not take water with their whiskey, but they're square with their women. Upon this touching scene, the film fades slowly into darkness, and then follows the announcement of next week's attractions, in brilliant colors.

THE villain is the third figure from the left. He may be one of two kinds—eastern or western. If he's the former, he wears a fur-lined overcoat, always open, and he owns one of those apartments with nude ladies holding bunches of grapes which light up. This shows that he is a man of wealth and artistic inclinations.

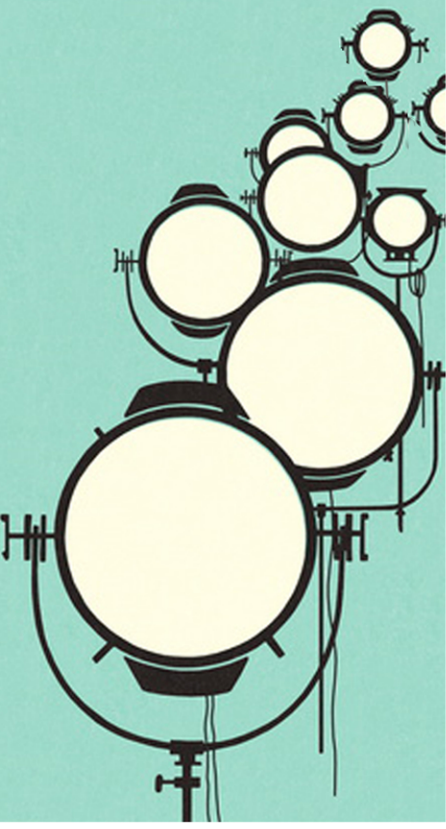
If he's a Westerner, however, he wears the usual Buffalo Bills, and he cheats at cards so cleverly that no one can detect him: no one, that is, but the audience.

Whether eastern or western, the villain is never without a big black cigar. On the screen a big black cigar always indicates villainy; on the stage, it means an impersonation of General Grant.

Mothers are also important figures in the screen world. The mother wears the conventional black and a becoming gray wig. She plays one of those watchful waiting parts—she never gives up hope that, maybe, Jim will get out of jail in time for Christmas. Mothers, in the movies, are never very well. They are always suffering uncomplainingly and they usually die at great length. In fact, it's considered rather unsportsmanlike for a mother to be still alive at the end of the picture.

The chee-ild is the lowest form of film life. The movie chee-ild is always a small blonde, who once overheard somebody say, "Isn't she cute?" and has tried to live up to it ever since. The little dear has the prettiest way of looking right into the camera every few minutes, just to be sure that she isn't missing anything that may be going on.

Of course, any Social Register of the movies cannot fail to include the director, the man behind the megaphone. He is a serious, tortoise-shell-glassed gentleman, who is always just on the point of revolutionizing the silent drama. His favorite indoor sport is giving out interviews, in which he may be quoted as saying "Motion pictures" (he always calls them "motion pictures," for publication) "are still in their infancy. It is but a matter of time when we shall have a universal screen language." These interviews are always illustrated with one of those shadowy photographs with the highlights on the brow, and are published in the magazine sections of the Sunday papers, under the title "Movies as a Fine Art."



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COMEDIANS and vampires are, of course, well-known movie figures, but they really couldn't be included in any perfectly nice left-to-right Social Register.

Their work is far too rough.

This concludes the evening's performance. Those who haven't seen all of the first show may remain for the second. Kindly pass out quietly, to the left. If you liked the show, please tell your friends,—if you didn't, don't tell the management.



V A N I T Y
F A I R

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