



The Besieged Ego: Doppelgangers and Split Identity Onscreen

Caroline Ruddell

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The Besieged Ego critically appraises the representation, or mediation, of identity in film and television through a thorough analysis of doppelgangers and split or fragmentary characters. The prevalence of non-autonomous characters in a wide variety of film and television examples calls into question the very concept of a unified, knowable identity. The form of the double, and cinematic modes and rhetorics used to denote fragmentary identity, is addressed in the book through a detailed analysis of texts drawn from a range of industrial, historical and cultural contexts.

The doppelganger or double carries significant cultural meanings about what it means to be human and the experience of identity as a gendered individual. The double also expresses in fictional form our problematic experience of the world as a social, and supposedly whole and autonomous, subject. *The Besieged Ego* therefore raises important questions about the representation of identity onscreen and concomitant issues regarding autonomy and the nature of lack and desire in identity formation and experience. This is essential reading for students and researchers in film theory, film genre, psychoanalysis and film, and film aesthetics.

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