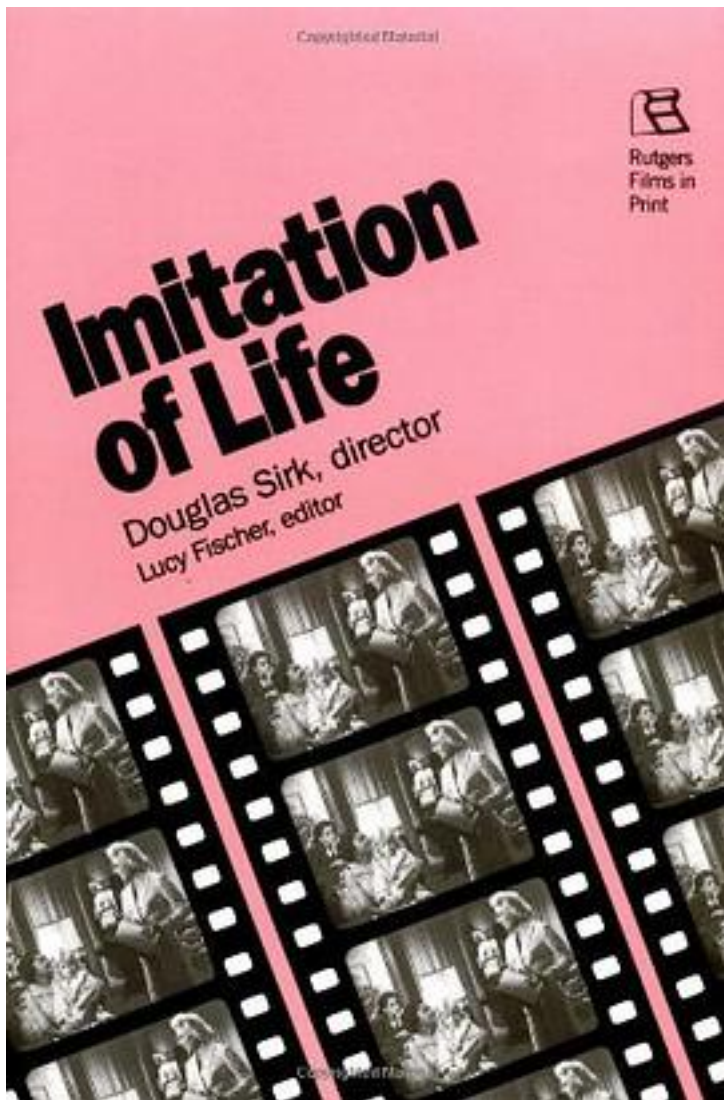


Imitation of Life



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著者:Fannie Hurst

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A bestseller in 1933, the novel *Imitation of Life* was made into two popular movies. Most well known today is Douglas Sirk's lush, stylized 1959 adaptation starring Lana Turner and Juanita Moore. The first film version, released in 1934, featured the Hollywood star Claudette Colbert and Louise Beavers, the most celebrated black actress of her day. *Imitation of Life* is the story of Bea Pullman, a white, middle-class widow, and her African American maid, Delilah Johnston, also a widow. The two women raise their daughters together and eventually collaborate on a restaurant venture. By combining Bea's business savvy with Delilah's irresistible southern recipes, they build an international restaurant empire. Yet their public success brings little happiness at home. Bea is torn between her responsibilities as a businesswoman and a mother. Delilah's light-skinned daughter, Peola, moves away in an attempt to pass as white. The book's central themes - relating to race, single motherhood, femininity, and the consumer marketplace - struck a chord with many readers in the 1930s and continue to resonate today. The novel's author, Fannie Hurst, was a major celebrity in the first half of the twentieth century. A highly paid writer of short stories, the author of numerous bestselling melodramatic novels, and an outspoken social activist, Hurst was surprised at the level of controversy generated by her characterizations of African Americans and inter-racial relations in *Imitation of Life*. Her friend Langston Hughes wrote a one-act parody, *Limitations of Life*, in which he reversed the races of Bea and Delilah. Daniel Itzkovitz's introduction situates *Imitation of Life* in its literary, biographical, and cultural contexts. Among the topics Itzkovitz addresses is the role of Zora Neale Hurston in the novel's development. Hurston worked as Fannie Hurst's personal secretary for a time. They later became friends, and Hurst's memoirs indicate that *Imitation of Life* is based in part on their relationship. This edition brings a classic of popular American literature back into print.

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