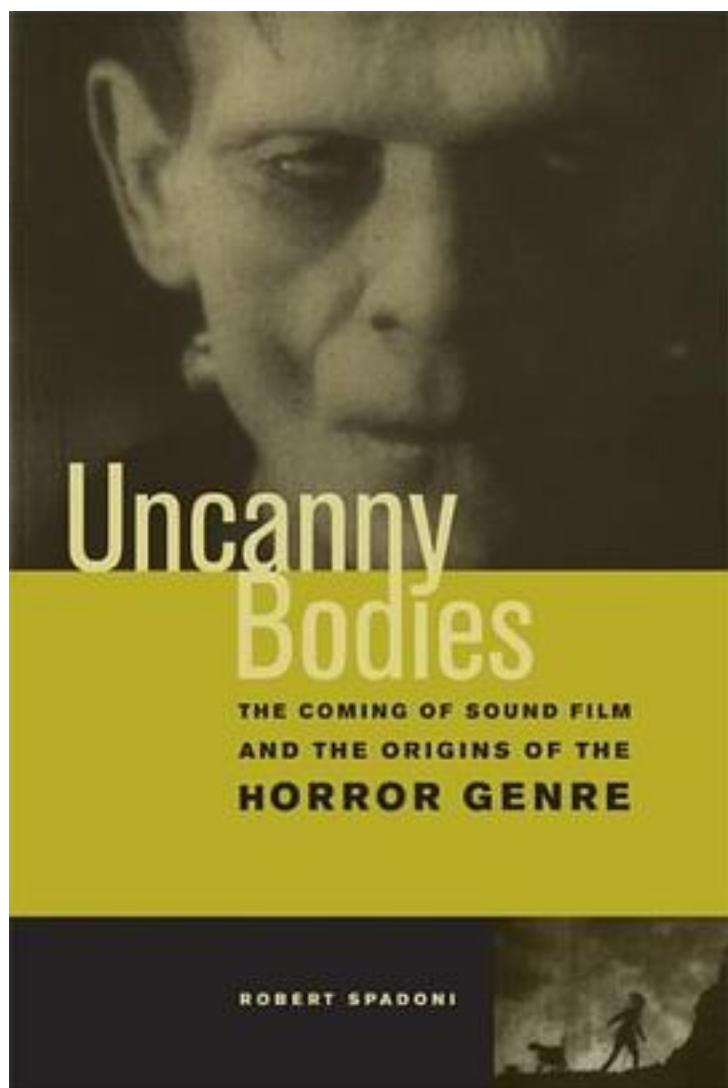


Uncanny Bodies



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In 1931 Universal Pictures released "Dracula" and "Frankenstein", two films that inaugurated the horror genre in Hollywood cinema. These films appeared directly on the heels of Hollywood's transition to sound film. "Uncanny Bodies" argues that the coming of sound inspired more in these massively influential horror movies than screams, creaking doors, and howling wolves. A close examination of the historical reception of films of the transition period reveals that sound films could seem to their earliest viewers unreal and ghostly. By comparing this audience impression to the first sound horror films, Robert Spadoni makes a case for understanding film viewing as a force that can powerfully shape both the minutest aspects of individual films and the broadest sweep of film production trends, and for seeing aftereffects of the temporary weirdness of sound film deeply etched in the basic character of one of our most enduring film genres.

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