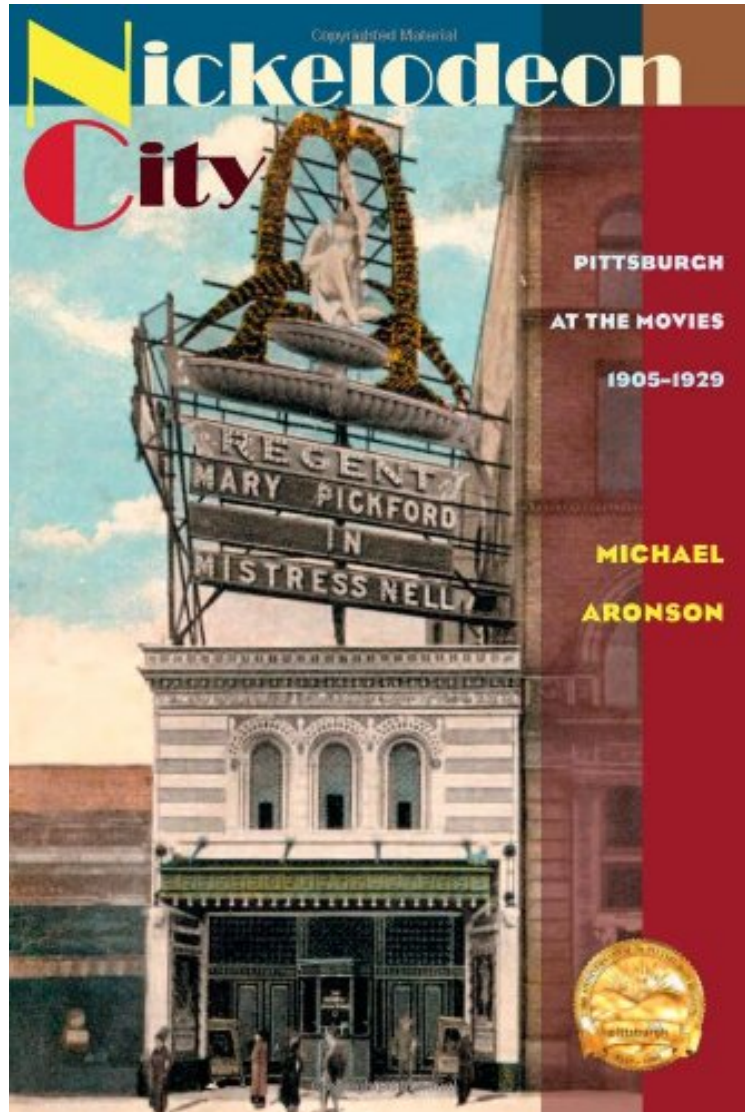


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Nickelodeon City: Pittsburgh at the Movies, 1905-1929

Michael Aronson

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Michael Aronson : Nickelodeon City: Pittsburgh at the Movies, 1905-1929 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nickelodeon City: Pittsburgh at the Movies, 1905-1929:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Early Movie Industry By Philip S. Taylor This is a very good account of the movie industry's beginnings in Pittsburgh where the nickelodeon craze started. The nickelodeons (1905-1915) created the moviegoer and moved cinema from a curiosity to a national pastime. This work was very well researched and encourages further reading: recommend-"The Emergence of Cinema" by Charles Musser. These and other books provide the movie buff with a good background in film before the 1920s. 0 of 0 people found the following review

helpful. Five StarsBy Avrum M. FineOutstanding look into the earliest days of America's motion picture industry.

From the 1905 opening of the wildly popular, eponymous Nickelodeon in the city's downtown to the subsequent outgrowth of nickel theaters in nearly all of its neighborhoods, Pittsburgh proved to be perfect for the movies. Its urban industrial environment was a melting pot of ethnic, economic, and cultural forces—a wellspring for the development of movie culture—and nickelodeons offered citizens an inexpensive respite and handy escape from the harsh realities of the industrial world. *Nickelodeon City* provides a detailed view inside the city's early film trade, with insights into the politics and business dealings of the burgeoning industry. Drawing from the pages of the *Pittsburgh Moving Picture Bulletin*, the first known regional trade journal for the movie business, Michael Aronson profiles the major promoters in Pittsburgh, as well as many lesser-known ordinary theater owners, suppliers, and patrons. He examines early film promotion, distribution, and exhibition, and reveals the earliest forms of state censorship and the ensuing political lobbying and manipulation attempted by members of the movie trade. Aronson also explores the emergence of local exhibitor-based cinema, in which the exhibitor assumed control of the content and production of film, blurring the lines between production, consumption, and local and mass media. *Nickelodeon City* offers a fascinating and intimate view of a city and the socioeconomic factors that allowed an infant film industry to blossom, as well as the unique cultural fabric and neighborhood ties that kept nickelodeons prospering even after Hollywood took the industry by storm.

Pittsburgh was the epicenter of the nickelodeon boom. Until now, accounts of what was often called 'the Pittsburgh Idea' have been more myth and legend dressed up with a few scattered facts than coherent history. *Nickelodeon City* is a book that was waiting, needing to be written. Who would have guessed it could be done with such perceptiveness and depth. Charles Musser, professor of film studies, Yale University, and author of *The Emergence of Cinema*