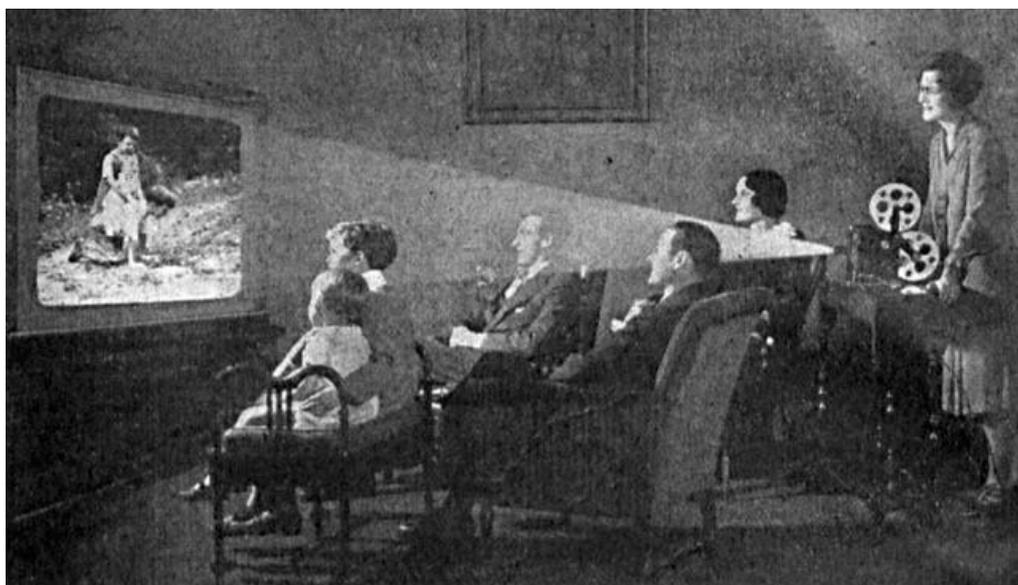


Workshop: Theorising Early Cinema in Latin America

Monday, 21 May, 2 – 4.30pm

Room 204, Second Floor, Alison Richard Building

7 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DT



Organised by

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And

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Recent years have seen much work on early cinema in film studies in general, with scholars focusing on what had previously been labelled the “primitive” years of film production, in order to theorise early cinema practices. This has involved reconsidering the history and aesthetics of early movies, examining for instance cinematic configurations of time in silent film. It has also taken on board extra-textual issues, such as film’s links with contemporary cultural practices and sites, and the ways in which critics, scholars, and writers reacted to, reflected on and theorised cinema during the early period and the ensuing decades. This new scholarship, however, has centred largely on the USA and Europe, with little attention to other regions. Aiming to redress this restricted focus, this workshop seeks to foreground new approaches to early cinema in Latin America in order to open up the field of study beyond Europe and North America. In this workshop we will analyse diverse ways in which Latin American writers, scholars and intellectuals theorised the cinematic medium in the first half of the twentieth century. We will also explore how historically-oriented research can shed new theoretical light upon the dynamics of early cinema in Latin America and its links to industry and labour. This dual approach to labour and early film theory seeks to move beyond the Eurocentric canon of mainstream film theory.

Participants are:

- **Nilo Couret (University of Michigan Ann Arbor)**, who will talk on Brazilian intellectuals' engagement with European art history and psychology in their construction of an early theory of the cinema.
- **María Chiara d'Argenio (University College London)** will discuss early theorizations of cinema in Peruvian literature and press.
- **David Wood (UNAM)** will analyse conceptions of documentary film and its relationship to the writing of history in the work of early-twentieth century Mexican chroniclers and novelists.
- **Rory O'Bryen (University of Cambridge)** will look at the visual articulation of trade and steam-driven modernity in Colombian silent film.
- **Sarah Ann Wells (University of Wisconsin, Madison)** will explore the shifting relationship between labour and cinematic temporality in 1910s documentary films in Argentina.
- **Maite Conde (University of Cambridge)** will examine propagandistic short documentaries known as *cavações* made in 1920s São Paulo and their links to the city's industrial development.

