



# **Dangerous Dames: Women and Representation in Film Noir and the Weimar Street Film**

*Jans B. Wager*

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Both film noir and the Weimar street film hold a continuing fascination for film spectators and film theorists alike. The female characters, especially the alluring femmes fatales, remain a focus for critical and popular attention. In the tradition of such attention, *Dangerous Dames* focuses on the femme fatale and her antithesis, the femme attrapée.

Unlike most theorists, Jans Wager examines these archetypes from the perspective of the female spectator and rejects the persistence of vision that allows a reading of these female characters only as representations of unstable postwar masculinity. Professor Wager suggests that the woman in the audience has always seen and understood these characters as representations of a complex aspect of her existence.

*Dangerous Dames* looks at the Weimar street films *The Street*, *Variety*, *Asphalt*, and *M* and the film noir movies *The Maltese Falcon*, *Gun Crazy*, and *The Big Heat*. This book opens the doors to spectators and theorists alike, suggesting cinematic pleasures outside the bounds of accepted readings and beyond the narrow categorization of film noir and the Weimar street film as masculine forms.

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