**The Emergence of May Pickford**

Background – born in Canada; child actress in theater: melodrama – histrionic acting.

Apprenticeship in short films with D.W. Griffith – learns natural acting.

Then went to work c. 1912 for the new corporate filmmakers such as Adolph Zukor (he paid her $500 per week in 1916): her movies were extremely popular until close to the end of the silent era; with Charlie Chaplin probably the most popular American star at that time; almost as popular abroad – she and new husband **Douglas Fairbanks** mobbed in London during their honeymoon 1920. Her career fades after the coming of sound.

The two build large West Hollywood home: Pickfair, where they reign as the King and Queen of Hollywood: image of respectability serves the interest of the studios in the 1920s.

**“The Little Princess” 1917**

Mary Pickford; Zasu Pitts as Becky, the servant girl; directed by Mickey Neilan, written by Frances Marion.

Fits into the category of the “middle class” film of the teens; look at the distance that films have traveled in 10 years!

Classical style? Editing; close-ups; animation.

Natural acting for a silent film?

Her persona: “America’s Sweetheart”; long hair with ringlets; pre-teen (playing her characters when she was in her 20s); innocent; kind and thoughtful, compassionate; brave and persevering; spunky, stands up for herself; resourceful and smart; always ready to teach her fans a lesson about how they should behave.

“Luminous tenderness in a steel band of gutter ferocity.”

Sentimental? Moralistic – cult of kindness, critique of class snobbery (USA’s self-image as opposed to Britain?). “We’re all princesses.”