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| The Bicycle Thief (1948) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| *Ladri di biciclette* (*The Bicycle Thief*) is a neorealist film by Vittorio De Sica, considered modern and revolutionary because it radically broke with pre-World War II Hollywood cinematic codes by using real people instead of actors and telling the story of an ordinary man. |
| File: Bicycle Thief.jpg  Figure 1 Still from The Bicycle Thief  source: <http://www.criterion.com/films/210-bicycle-thieves>  *Ladri di biciclette* (*The Bicycle Thief*) is a neorealist film by Vittorio De Sica, considered modern and revolutionary because it radically broke with pre-World War II Hollywood cinematic codes by using real people instead of actors and telling the story of an ordinary man*.* Italian neorealism was a film movement committed to the economic and moral rebuilding of post-war Italy through its portrayal of poverty and injustice; neorealist films were anti-commercial, left-wing, and devoted to the belief that politically committed art could improve society*.* Inspired by Luigi Bartolini’s novel, *Bicycle Thief* tells the story of Antonio Ricci and his son, Bruno, in post-war Rome. Unable to find employment, Antonio pawns the bed sheets for a bicycle so he can accept a job pasting up publicity posters for movies.  File: ladri\_di\_biciclette\_splash\_2.jpg  Figure 2 Still from The Bicycle Thief  source: <http://www.filmtv.it/film/3831/ladri-di-biciclette/foto/1/>  After the bike is stolen, he and Bruno spend the entire day searching Rome for it. *Bicycle Thief* conforms to the stylistic tenets of neorealism: the use of nonprofessional actors, a rejection of commercial cinematic techniques, simplicity, on-location shooting, and socio-political critique. However, as a big-budget film with a cast of hundreds, itupdates the neorealist aesthetic. While *Roma città aperta* (*Rome Open City*, 1945, Roberto Rossellini)*,* the founding neorealist film, focuses on a dramatic subject, *Bicycle Thief* locates drama in everyday situations. De Sica spent six months preparing the script and calculating the realistic filming style. Ultimately, he crafted the illusion of realism and technical poverty, thus providing a significant stylistic shift within the neorealist movement.  File: <http://www.mondo-digital.com/bicycle.html>  3 *The Bicycle Thief* Trailer  File: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAhAgyXHC4M>  4 Italian Neorealism: A History through Film |
| Further reading:  (Bingham)  (Marcus)  (Tomasulo)  (Wagstaff)  (Wood) |