*Rear Window*

*Rear Window* is a 1955 suspense film directed by Alfred Hitchcock and written by

John Michael Hayes, who adapted the short story “It Had to Be Murder” by Cornell Woolrich. It stars James Stewart, Grace Kelly, Thelma Ritter, Wendell Corey, and Raymond Burr and is considered widely to be one of Hitchcock’s greatest films. The plot centres on L.B. “Jeff” Jeffries (Stewart), a photographer with a broken leg, who spies on his neighbours to pass the time and soon begins to suspect one of them has murdered his wife. Filmed on a single, enormous set, it is notable for its limited use of perspectives (with virtually every shot originating from inside Jeff’s apartment) and reliance on diegetic music and sound. Analyses of *Rear Window* often focus on the ways Jeff’s voyeurism and obsession (recurring themes in Hitchcock’s works) self-reflexively invoke the association between cinema and spectator. Jeff’s window becomes a metaphorical screen through which he finds vicarious pleasures in the unfolding “stories” of his neighbours. The film’s gender relations – including Jeff’s troubled relationship to his girlfriend Lisa (Kelly) and the numerous relationships visible to him in the apartment complex – have also generated feminist interpretations about cinematic spectatorship.

Further reading:

Belton, J. (ed.) (2000), *Alfred Hitchcock’s* *Rear Window*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Modleski, T. (1988), "The Master's Dollhouse: *Rear Window*," in *The Women Who Knew Too Much: Hitchcock and Feminist Theory,* New York: Methuen.

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**Please hyperlink the following terms and titles:**

**[Paragraph 1]**

*Rear Window*: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0047396/

Alfred Hitchcock: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000033/

John Michael Hayes: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0371088/

Cornell Woolrich: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornell\_Woolrich

James Stewart: www.imdb.com/name/nm0000071/

Grace Kelly: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000038/

Thelma Ritter: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0728812/

Wendell Corey: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0179819/

Raymond Burr: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000994/

“limited use of perspectives”: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vHRw9XiFMI