

How to Research Movies *ONLINE*

by *Paul B. Wiener*

Film Librarian

Stony Brook University Library

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You need to write about a movie. Great! That sounds almost too easy. Where to begin?

Everyone has seen movies – many more than we can remember. Not to mention TV and “videos.” Movies quickly become a part of our memories and perceptions, and we casually refer to them when we talk about our so-called real life. We often feel movies help us understand things. “That reminds me of that crazy guy Joe Pesci plays in *Casino*.....” “You know *The Blair Witch Project* ----- did that *really* happen?” “I feel just like Susan Sarandon in *Thelma and Louise*...” “Was *Fahrenheit 9/11* really telling us the facts?” Movies pervade our dreams and plans.

Skip the Introduction

We treat movies like history, like facts. Do movies really “happen?” Are they really illusions? Can a movie “quote” another movie? Can an actor *create* a character? Does a character ever “do” anything?

When writing about movies, what can we say that is more than our opinion?

Movies can be studied like every other phenomenon. There are hundreds of ways to discuss them. But how many of us have ever really studied a movie the way we have studied a book, a poem, an event, the behavior of a rat, the Civil War or a Super Bowl game?

How hard could it be to research a movie?

It's not hard at all. Almost everyone has an opinion or an observation about a particular movie, and many have written them down. Some do it for a living.

Research is finding what they've written and using it to help us think or act.

Movies have long been considered a medium for the masses, but the masses – the great majority of men and women - neither read nor write for scholarly journals. They rarely even see them. To the masses, the names of most scholarly journals are a complete mystery. But most of us know the names of newspapers and magazines.

Most critics and journalists try to write for the masses; they want the average person to be able to understand them, if not agree with them.

Outside of books, most popular writing about movies is in newspapers and popular magazines. A great deal of writing is now done on the Internet as well. Much of it is written by intelligent, well-informed people – professional critics and other writers, people in the entertainment industry or in public life, movie lovers, filmmakers, etc. Though these people rarely publish in scholarly journals, their opinions and observations are often valuable.

For a variety of reasons less scholarly material is published about particular movies than about particular books or pieces of music. Literature and music, of course, have been around much longer. Until recently, the study of movies has developed through the study of literature.

Many scholars have written about the history and impact of movies. They write about the way a movie is constructed, its music, its scenery, its photography, and about every other element. They compare movies to “reality”, to books and to other movies. Many feel that movies reflect the values of different large and small populations of artists and viewers. Movies can be considered the creation of societies, directors, writers, studios, special interests, technologists or some combination of these.

Most critics and scholars would agree that a few hundred movies can be considered “classics,” the kind of cultural experiences any educated person should be familiar with.

Where you start your research – either about movies in general or about specific movies – will depend on your assignment, on what kind movie it is, on what other topics you're discussing in your paper, and on what point you're trying to make.

There *are* scholarly resources about movies. Many are in the Library. Some are online. In fact, it can be difficult to find scholarly *or* non-scholarly information about movies *without* using the Library. Indexes, or **databases**, provided by libraries, can guide you quickly to collections of articles and information sources.

These databases can help you find essays and criticism about “The Sopranos,” “Singin’ in the Rain,” or “The Godfather”, Bruce Willis or Bruce Lee, film noir, John Ford, Mary Pickford or John Waters, poverty or religion, fantasy or documentary, as easily as you can learn about “Hamlet,” “Leaves of Grass,” “The Grapes of Wrath,” Kate Chopin, Michel Foucault, photosynthesis or the Victorians.

General information databases index the articles – millions of them - from many magazines, journals and newspapers over many years. They are good tools for finding non-scholarly writing. Most of the films and topics covered in them, though, are often less than ten years old. These databases are accessible only by subscription, or through the Stony Brook University Library, which leases them. Typical are

[Academic Search Premier](#)

[WilsonWeb](#)

[Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe](#)

[\(Return to Introduction\)](#)

Search results for “movies and hip hop” on the WilsonWeb database might look like this-----

The screenshot displays the WilsonWeb Basic Search interface. The top navigation bar includes the WilsonWeb logo, the title 'Basic Search', and an 'Exit Program' button. A left sidebar contains a vertical menu with options: 'Advanced Search' (highlighted in yellow), 'Basic Search', 'Browse', 'Search History', 'Thesaurus', 'Print Email Save', 'Exporting/Citing', 'Create Alerts', 'Help', and 'Journal Directory'. The main content area shows the search criteria: 'Current Search: (hip hop) <in> ALL AND movies <in> ALL' and 'Records: 205'. It lists the databases searched: 'In: Essay & General Lit, Readers' Guide Full Text, OmniFile Full Text Mega, Humanities Full Text'. On the right, there are options to 'Limit these results' with checkboxes for 'Full Text', 'PDF', and 'Peer Reviewed'. Below this, the 'Subjects' section lists related topics: 'Hip-hop in motion pictures', 'Hip-hop', 'Blacks in motion pictures', 'Blacks in the motion picture industry', 'Hip-hop/Economic aspects', and 'Motion pictures/Influence'. The search results are listed in a table with columns for a percentage (80%), a checkbox, a number, and the citation text. Each result has links for 'Full Text HTML' and 'Full Text PDF'.

WilsonWeb Basic Search Exit Program

Current Search: (hip hop) <in> ALL AND movies <in> ALL
Records: 205
In: Essay & General Lit, Readers' Guide Full Text, OmniFile Full Text Mega, Humanities Full Text

Limit these results
to: ☐ Full Text
☒ PDF
☐ Peer Reviewed

Subjects: [Hip-hop in motion pictures](#) | [Hip-hop](#) | [Blacks in motion pictures](#) | [Blacks in the motion picture industry](#) | [Hip-hop/Economic aspects](#) | [Motion pictures/Influence](#) |

80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Wise, D. Boom raider . <i>Sight & Sound</i> v. ns12 no. 5 (May 2002) p. 16-18 Full Text HTML Full Text PDF
80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Samuels, A. Minstrels in Baggy Jeans? . <i>Newsweek</i> v. 141 no. 18 (May 5 2003) p. 62-3 Full Text HTML
80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Spruell, S. P. Hip-hop at the Movies . <i>Black Enterprise</i> v. 32 no. 12 (July 2002) p. 62-6 Full Text HTML Full Text PDF
80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	McWhorter, J. H. Up from Hip-Hop . <i>Commentary</i> v. 115 no. 3 (March 2003) p. 62-5 Full Text HTML
80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Osmond, A. Anime with attitude . <i>Sight & Sound</i> v. ns15 no. 10 (October 2005) p. 96 Full Text HTML Full Text PDF
80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Schwarzbaum, L. A sidelong glance at hip-hop, the media, and would-be playas . <i>Entertainment Weekly</i> no. 817/818 (April 29-May 6 2005) p. 127 Full Text HTML

[Revise Search](#) [Full](#) [Get Marked](#) [Clear Marks](#) [Customize Display](#)

Other databases provide more **scholarly articles** about movies - writing by professors, experts and professionals in film studies or film production - that are published in journals edited and read by specialists in the field. These journals are often called “peer-reviewed” – an author’s expertise is judged to be worthy of publication by editors who are specialists, or peers, in the field (like filmmaking). You can usually find these articles by searching one of the following databases for a particular movie, the name of a film director, writer or producer, and sometimes actor, or other persons prominently associated with a film, and for topics and terms specific to film study. Often the database gives you the option of searching *only* for scholarly, or peer-reviewed, articles.

Topics about different aspects of film and society – i.e., how women or Italians are portrayed, movies and music, silent film, animation, sports, school, mental illness, science, politics – can be found with **keyword searches**. Terms for *film genres* – musical, film noir, horror, western, action, science fiction – can often be part of keyword searches as well. Each of the databases below uses different screens or search techniques, but all take advantage of basic *keyword indexing*. (*Again, these are accessible by subscription only.*)

JSTOR

Project MUSE

Wilson Omnifile

History of the American Cinema

Arts & Humanities Citation Index

Ingenta Select

Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center

Researching film often calls for creative ways of using the World Wide Web. New sites and search capabilities on the internet will reward the patient scholar with materials and information never hinted at in more conventional sources. Here are some tips:

We all know [Google](#) is there, but did you know that you can focus Google searches carefully by typing in your search term, space, and *adding* [site:edu](#) to find sites on servers from universities and colleges? [example](#)
[site:edu/library](#) or [site:edu/film](#) to find sites from university libraries, film departments, or other qualifying words after the slash? [example 1](#); [example 2](#)
[filetype:doc](#) or [filetype:pdf](#) or [filetype:ppt](#) to find information in Word documents, in pdf-formatted documents, or to find Powerpoint presentations? [example 1](#); [example 2](#)

- [YouTube](#) many unexpected, often unauthorized, film clips show up on YouTube, as well as other presentations and references to the world of film
- [Google Blog Search](#) thousands of blogs exist completely devoted to film, most of them written by film lovers, buffs, fanatics and free-lance scholars. Information, often current, may appear here that can be found nowhere else. The Google engine searches words in various blogs, as well as blog titles and blogs by topic. Often you can contact the bloggers to clarify information.
- [Wikipedia Film Portal](#) Wikipedia is often thought of as a last resort for scholars. But many of its entries contain excellent links to authoritative websites. Moreover, the inaccuracy of this online encyclopedia is highly exaggerated. Doublecheck information, sure, then judge for yourself. Not only can most topics and names be found here, but a film Portal points to many specialized areas of study.
- [Film Studies Search Engine](#) the author has developed a customized search engine, using Google technology, that searches dozens of websites dedicated to film study, news, scholarship and trivia.

Many free web sites and blogs are now dedicated to promoting and discussing movies. Some of the most reputable ones are listed below. Many of these sites give links to other interesting sites. In some ways you can literally surf your way to new information.

[Green Cine Daily](#)

[IndieWire](#)

[Roger Ebert](#)

[Film-Philosophy](#)

[Senses of Cinema](#)

[Anime News Network](#)

[The Criterion Collection](#)

[Images: a Journal of Film & Popular Culture](#)

[AMPAS](#) (Motion Picture Academy, Oscars, etc.)

[Bright Lights](#)

[Strictly Film School](#)

[Top Grossing Films Ever](#)

A Note on Searching with Keywords

Computerized indexes find articles by looking for the exact words that are used in the digitized record and description of an article or chapter. If you know the exact *title* of an article, or the exact *last name(s)* of the authors, the computer can locate them quickly, *if* the database you're using indexes the journal that the article was in. If it doesn't, you can try another database.

If you don't know a specific title, you tell the computer to use one or more words to search through millions of articles in thousands of journals. The word may be in the title. But most often the word is in the text of the article, or in the abstract or summary, or in the words that were used to record and identify the article when it was indexed. Many keywords can describe one concept.

Using a *single* keyword like "politics" usually finds too many articles to make it easy for you to isolate one article, or several, that are useful. And it limits the conceptual range you can explore. You might have to read through 4500 titles! Using two or three keywords instead, like "politics and movies," "politics and film," or "politics and European and film" is much more likely to find a shorter, browsable number of articles that concern your specific interests. The more specific the keyword (i.e., "genocide," "Mormons," "tea ceremony," "Beethoven," "Jud Apatow"), the more you are likely to find what you need. The more keywords you try, the greater the selection of articles that will be searched. *Remember, many topics can be described by more than one word* (i.e., "education" may also be covered under "learning, college, students, school, teaching, scholarly, expertise, childhood, or careers")

[back to scholarly database list](#)

There is one database, created by the International Federation of Film Archives, that specializes in indexing *only* articles about film, but it's not very easy to use.

Most of these articles are presented as citation-only: the full text is often not provided. Listings are given from over 300 journals around the world and go back as far as 1972.

Other elements of this database include libraries, archives, television, bibliographies and filmographies. You can access this database only through the Library Home Page, at this link:

[FIAF](#)

Free Sources of Movie Information

Many websites provide important information often *not* found in scholarly articles: biographies, catalogs, histories, statistics, film clips and stills, trailers, posters, production and technological data, television programming, costs and profits. Below are several of interest.

[IMDB](#) (Internet Movie Database)

[Movies Unltd.](#) (commercial site)

[LC \(American Memory\)](#) (Library of Congress)

[LC \(Motion Picture & Television\)](#)

[Vanderbilt Television News Archive](#)

[Moving Image Archive](#)

[American Film Institute](#)

[British Film Institute](#)

[NYU \(Tisch School of the Arts\) : Cinema Studies](#)

[UCLA Film, TV & Digital Media Dept.](#)

[Variety](#)

[McLuhan.ca Resources](#)

Online Directories of Film Research

Some web sites present comprehensive, often annotated lists of places on the web where you can go for more specific information and resources on various subjects.

[Intute](#)

[BUBL](#)

[Voice of the Shuttle](#)

[Librarians Index to the Internet](#)

[UC Berkeley Film Studies Resources](#)

[Yahoo: Movies and Film](#)

[Research Websites: Film & Media](#)

[Yale Guide to Film Research](#)

Movie Reviews

Many websites, newspapers, popular magazines, books and TV shows review movies. Reviews often contain useful information and unique insights. The older the film, the harder it may be to find a review online. Remember, in a library there are still many offline (print) resources you can use. Below is a list of some of the largest sources of online reviews.

[Rotten Tomatoes](#)

[Metacritic](#)

[Movie Review Query Engine](#)

[New York Times Movie Reviews](#)

[Pop Matters](#)

Film Scripts

Except for a few hundred classic films published in book form, it can be very difficult to find accurate film scripts for free, even in libraries. Most film scripts are either unpublished, expensive collector's items or unauthorized drafts. One source of free "unofficial" film scripts is

[Drew's Script-o-Rama](#)

Difficulties with locating original scripts are tied to complicated permissions negotiations. Holders of the scripts are often reluctant to lend the documents because they are unique. Moreover, some scripts are not finalized or published as coherent texts; and sometimes acting or directing happens spontaneously.

A new reference work published by the Alexander Street Press called [American Film Scripts Online](#) contains authorized versions of the shooting scripts of 1000 movies, some more detailed than others. Our Library, however, does not yet have access to this collection.

Note: try not to overestimate the value of seeing a film script in the overall analysis of a film. The text is simply one element of many that make up a film. Some others are music, lighting, set design, editing, sound editing, acting, wardrobe, lighting, direction & cinematography. If you turn off the sound while viewing a film, it's a completely different animal.

Film Schools as Information Sources

Exploring the home pages of film schools, university film departments, or graduate programs in film studies, production, media and communications will often lead to useful links, resources, criticism, specialized histories and unexpected references. Besides the well-known schools like those at NYU, UCLA, Florida State University, USC and the American Film Institute there are dozens of excellent programs spread out across the country. Many of them are listed on this [directory page](#), and in [this one](#).

Looking through issues of film journals and periodicals can be very productive, especially if you have a favorite journal. But generally speaking, it's much easier to look up articles by [searching databases](#), as previously discussed, than by looking in specific journals. If you do want to look at particular film journals, the Library offers many titles online, as well as many in print. Most of the well-known film journals have been digitized or have home pages . In the SBU Library, you can find journal titles (*but not the titles of the articles in them!*) in either of two ways: by searching the [E-Journals link](#) by subject, from [the Library Home Page](#), or by using the online catalog, [STARS](#) and clicking on the [Go the Journal Catalog](#) link. In the catalog, searching under “title keywords” for “cinema or film or movies or video” will pull up many more titles than searching only for “films” will. Some of the film periodicals the SBU Library carries online are

Camera Obscura

Cineaste

Cinema Journal

Film Comment

Film Quarterly

Journal of Film Preservation

Journal of Popular Films & Television

Sight and Sound

Wide Angle

Bibliographic Citation for Film and Video

Writing a research paper almost always involves creating a bibliography – a list citing the sources of information the paper is based on. You may want to cite various movies you know or watched during your research. Well-known protocols for formatting citations have been developed over the years by several organizations. MLA, APA and Chicago Style Guidelines are the best-known. Originally they applied only to print sources. These protocols have now been expanded to include movies and all kinds of mediated and electronic sources, though there's still some disagreement on which citation elements must be included, and where. All the current guides to citation formatting now include examples of how to cite films, videos, radio and television programs. Citing articles *about* these films follows different protocols.

. The basic MLA style for citing a film or video can be seen here:

The Usual Suspects. Dir. Bryan Singer. Perf. Kevin Spacey, Gabriel Byrne, Chazz Palminteri, Stephen Baldwin, and Benicio del Toro. Polygram, 1995.

Lucas, George, dir. Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope. 1977. Twentieth Century Fox, 1997.

"The Blessing Way." The X-Files. Fox. WXIA, Atlanta. 19 Jul. 1998.

Ed Wood. Dir. Tim Burton. Perf. Johnny Depp, Martin Landau, Sarah Jessica Parker, Patricia Arquette. 1994. DVD. Touchstone, 2004.

Additional, detailed information and guidelines on these and other media formatting issues can be found at these university-based websites:

[Yale Writing Center](#)
[Online Writing Lab at Purdue](#)
[Columbia Guide to Online Style](#)

It's time to admit what we all suspected: ~~not everything can be found online~~. There are still many books and essays by film scholars and critics to examine, without which the area of film studies would never have developed. Careful, patient reading of these works will reward film scholars and film lovers alike with arguments, perspectives, illustrations, records, examples and detailed histories one may never encounter online. While the following writers are all represented to some degree online, there are few pleasures that compare to a first leisurely reading of books like Robert Ray's *A Certain Tendency of the Hollywood Cinema, 1930-1980*, Pauline Kael's *I Lost It at the Movies*, James Naremore's *Acting in the Cinema* or Garth Jowett's *Film the Democratic Art*.

Selected Notable Film Critics & Scholars

The Library at SBU, like most large university libraries, has books by all these authors - but you already know how to use the library catalog to find them.

Robert Ray
Robin Wood
Rudolf Arnheim
Andre Bazin
Stanley Cavell
Sergei Eisenstein
E. Ann Kaplan (at SBU)
William Everson
Richard Roud
Andrew Sarris
David Thomson
Leonard Maltin
Jonathan Rosenbaum
John Simon
Molly Haskell
Camille Paglia

Stanley Kaufman
James Naremore
Pauline Kael
Lewis Jacobs
Kevin Brownlow
David Bordwell
Roger Ebert
Garth Jowett
Krin Gabbard (at SBU)
David Bordwell
Eric Barnouw
Susan Sontag
Phillip Lopate
Sergei Eisenstein
Siegfried Kracauer
Teresa de Lauretis

BEYOND ONLINE

The following slides show several of the key reference books that cover the broad range of Film Studies. All are in the Library.

The **Cinema Arts Center** in Huntington is the leading film organization in Suffolk County (about a 25-minute drive from the SBU campus), and one of the best in the country. It shows art films, old films, foreign films and unusual films. It also sponsors lectures, courses and film-related social events. For Stony Brook students and film lovers the CAC is a rare and dynamic resource for film study. Membership is available.



Cinema Arts Centre

423 Park Avenue

(100 Yards South of Rt 25A, Main Street)

Huntington, NY 11743

631-423-FILM

<http://www.cinemaartscentre.org/>

[Map/Directions](#)

A not-for-profit organization that hosts continuous showings of high-quality, art, independent, classic, foreign, often politicized films rarely or never seen elsewhere on Long Island or on television. It also sponsors classes, lectures, performances, appearances by well-known directors and actors, discussions and community events.

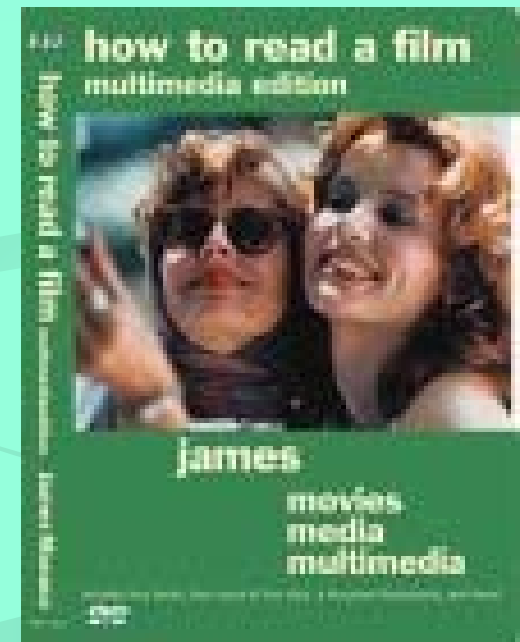
How to Read a Film, Multimedia Edition,

by James Monaco, Oxford UP/Harbor
Electronic Publishing, 2000,

Library Video: DVD-ROM 1 (3rd floor video collection)

Library Book: PN1994.M59 2000 (stacks)

- Four complete books: the completely revised *How To Read a Film*, *The Dictionary of New Media*, *Reading about Film*, and *Reading about New Media*.
- More than 130 film clips — Hollywood classics, cult landmarks, rare finds, famous sequences - over four hours of film.
- Audio interviews with Hollywood movers and shakers
- Animated interactive diagrams
- Film labs with a short movie shot especially for the disc - users can choose their own shots, edit the movie, and mix the soundtrack
- Virtual Reality tours of Hollywood studios
- A library of more than 140 reference texts, diagrams, charts, and databases
- Completely indexed - references to any subject, person, theme, or film

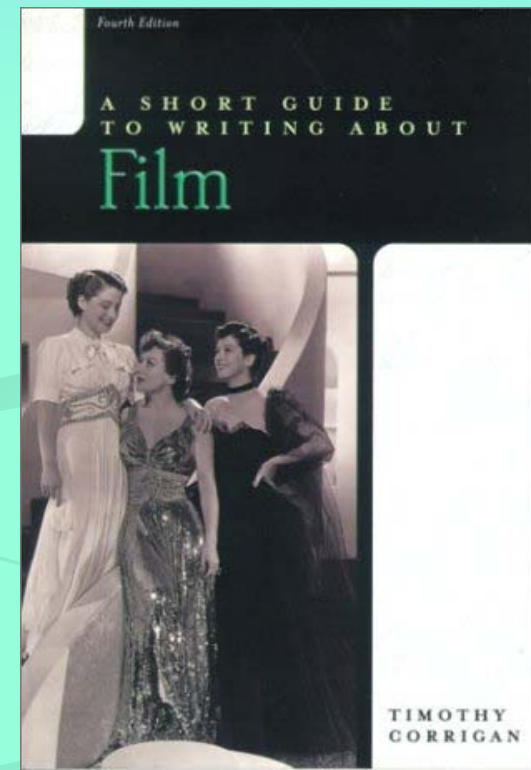


A Short Guide to Writing about Film (4th Edition)

by Timothy Corrigan, Pearson Education, 2000.

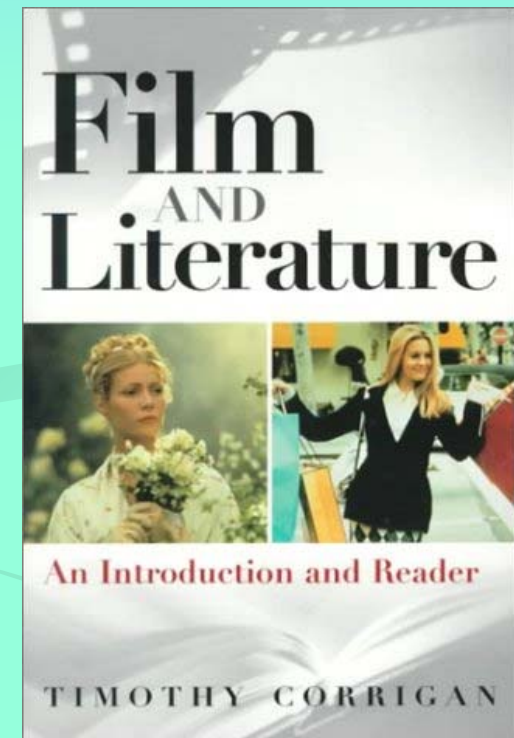
Library Stacks: PN1995.C665 1998

Writing about the Movies
Preparing to Watch and Preparing to Write
Film Terms and Topics
Six Approaches to writing about Film
Style and Structure in Writing
Researching the Movies
Manuscript Form
Online Resources and Annotation



Film and Literature: an Introduction and Reader, by Timothy Corrigan, Prentice Hall, 1998

This book is a wide-ranging introduction to the long history and provocative debates about the interactions between film and literature. *Film and Literature: A Reader* presents essays from a variety of cultures that address the major issues in film and literature since the beginning of the twentieth century. The book provides landmark discussions of different genres and practices (such as poetry and movies or film scripts as literature) through writings by such figures as Vachel Lindsay, Walter Benjamin, and Alexander Astruc. It presents a concise, but detailed history of film and literature and the critical terms and techniques used in film and literary analysis as well as a detailed history of the bond between film and literature, from theatrical narratives of the silent film era to recent blockbuster adaptations of Shakespeare and Jane Austen. It also features introductions to each essay and suggests how the essays may be used to analyze works involving film and literature.

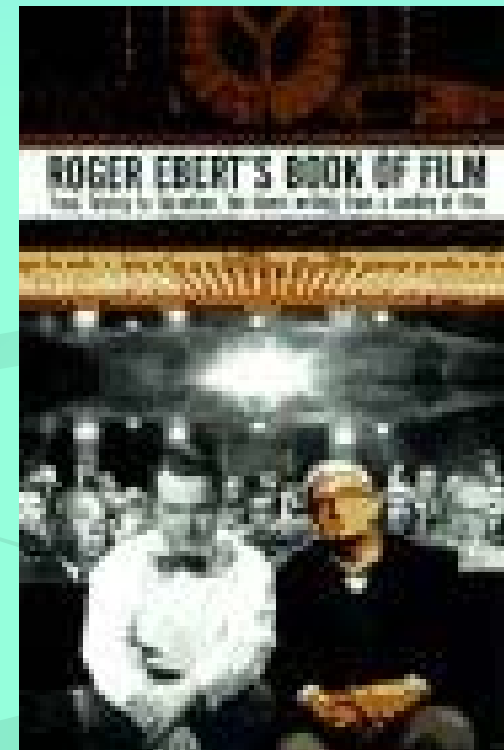


Roger Ebert's Book of Film

by Roger Ebert

W.W. Norton, 1996

One of the best anthologies of writing about the movies ever published. Choosing from the work of novelists and essayists as well as directors, actors, screenwriters and technicians, Ebert includes more than 100 examples of the best that has ever been said or thought about the movies. Here Graham Greene, Delmore Schwartz, and Susan Sontag sit down with Akira Kurosawa, Janet Leigh, and Budd Schulberg; Robert Stone, Julia Phillips, and Kenneth Anger share space with Louise Brooks, Gore Vidal, and John Updike. Well-organized with lively commentary by the editor.

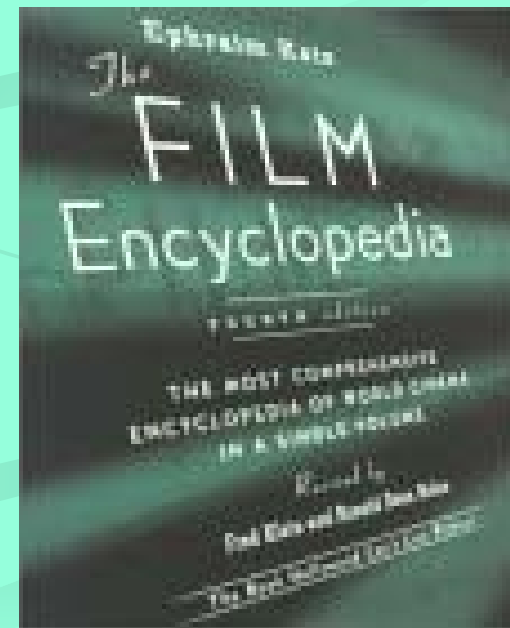


The Film Encyclopedia: The Most Comprehensive Encyclopedia of World Cinema in a Single Volume (4th ed) by Ephraim Katz, Fred Klein & Ronald Dean Nolen

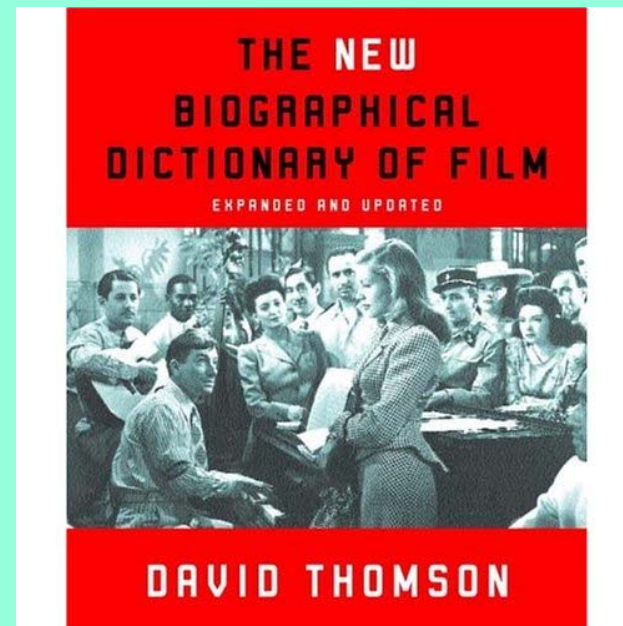
HarperResource, 2001 (check for newer editions)

Long considered the undisputed Bible of movie information, Ephraim Katz's *The Film Encyclopedia* is the most comprehensive one-volume encyclopedia on film. Unrivalled in its scope, this intelligent and engrossing A to Z reference contains nearly 8,000 entries on the artistic, technical, and commercial aspects of moviemaking, including:

- Directors, producers, stars, screenwriters, and cinematographers
- Styles, genres, and schools of filmmaking
- Motion picture studios and film centers
- Film-related organizations and events
- Industry jargon and technical terms
- Inventions, inventors, and equipment



This mammoth work (Knopf, 2004) – witty, detailed, brilliant, opinionated, incisive - covers nearly all the major and minor players in filmmaking and history. Thomson has known many personally. The only book that competes with, and sometimes exceeds, the extensive coverage found in the Internet Movie Database. Similar in style to Nicolas Slonimsky's well-known *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, Revised*.



When you have read all the studies, criticism, history, searched the entire Web, checked out all the links, blogs, books, databases and digitized archives, and you're still not sure if you really know what you watched, can you anything more? Here are a few last-minute tips:

- Look for the quality video collections, like [Criterion](#), [Cinema Guild](#), [First Run Features](#), [Facets Multimedia](#), and [New Yorker Films](#). These publishers specialize in high quality film transfers, and the discs often contain supplementary material - outtakes, discussions, "making-of" documentaries, script changes, interviews, stills, and explanations of production issues. The rental mail order company [Netflix](#) can generally be counted on to supply quality videos.
- Not everyone can afford to go [Sundance](#) or [Cannes](#) every year, but most campuses and communities offer some sort of film series, local festival, or special program, where you can see films not shown in the multiplexes or even on late-night cable. In the NYC area check out the [New York Film Festival](#), the [Film Society of Lincoln Center](#), the [Tribeca Film Festival](#), the [Hamptons Film Festival](#), the [Stony Brook Film Festival](#) at the Staller Center, or [other NYC film venues](#).
- Become familiar with the cable tv channels that feature good, rare, historic, and independent films, like Bravo, A & E, The Movie Channel, HBO, STARZ, [Cinemax](#), [IFC](#), and the [Sundance Channel](#). If a broadcast channel interrupts a movie with ads, try to see it somewhere else.
- **Your own library** – public and academic – may have a large, unpublicized collection of films available on video that you can view on the premises or borrow for a few days. SBU has over 7000. Unlike video stores, library collections are rarely constrained by popular taste and mainstream titles.

Digital awareness

There can be no question that digital technology has revolutionized film study. Not only is researching film - in libraries, indexes, archives, on websites and blogs - easier and faster, but the way movies are *viewed* now make it possible to index movies - to stop action, frame by frame, if necessary - and retrieve scenes by number, keywords and other emerging tags (metadata). Playback controls can enhance stills and scenes. You can take movies with you and view them almost anywhere. Critical analyses and papers can be written, published, and sent online with illustrative examples embedded in them as files and URLs. Key scenes can be re-edited, re-imagined, compared, compiled and identified (by genre, actor, length, lighting, music, date, effects, color, and a hundred other factors). In only a few years many of these films will be available online, downloadable, or stored in new micromedia. You'll be able to study them online, or label, annotate, cut and paste from them (YouTube already makes this possible). You'll be able to watch in ways even the filmmakers themselves couldn't have imagined.

*Now, if you're still uncertain about what your movie is all about,
watch it again. And then again.*

No movie can truly be seen after only one viewing.

Slow down your vision.

Look for the details and remember them. Take notes.

*Watch the way movies make time pass
in a world where matter doesn't matter.*