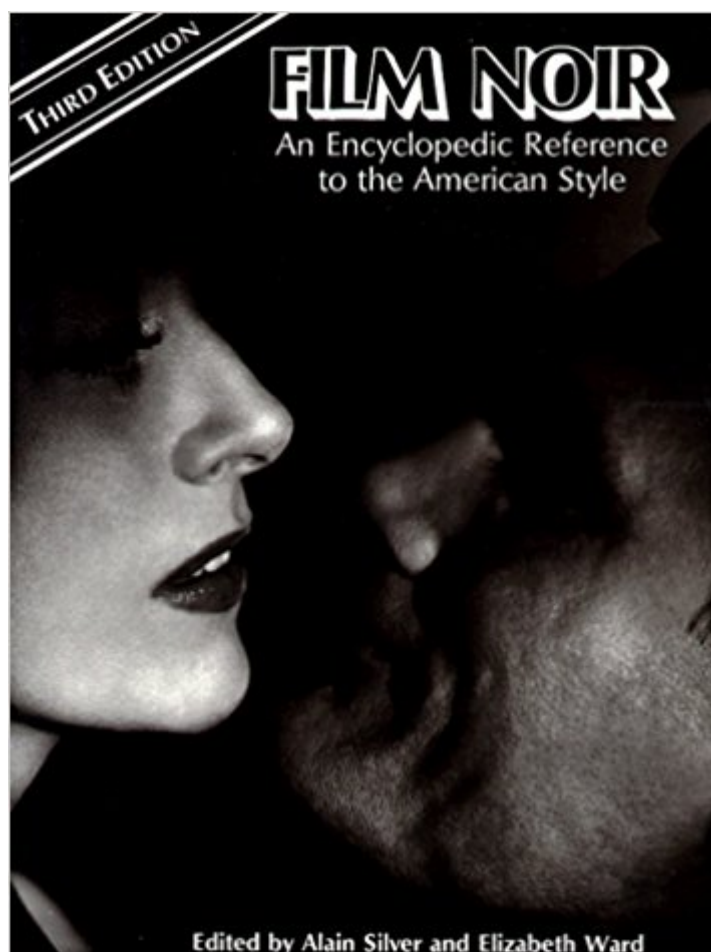


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Film Noir: An Encyclopedic Reference To The American Style, Third Edition



Synopsis

Book by

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Customer Reviews

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Excellent reference material and jumping-off point for further viewing and study.

This book is the bible of film noir, and the 1992 revisions of the 3rd edition make it even more useful than before. Want to know who plays every bit part in one of your favorite films noirs? The info is here. Want to know when shooting started? When it was released into theaters? Ditto. Want a chronological list of the great noirs? Or more "inside" film lists, organized by directors, stars, even cinematographers? They're here. One of the old criticisms of the previous editions of the book is that its plot summaries were sometimes incorrect in the details. The authors cleaned up some of those problems in this edition, although they decided not to add or change text that would disrupt the original page layout. This means that the new language is a compromise for space, and it doesn't quite live up to the original. And some developments of the past decade, like the discovery of a print of the silent noir "The Racket," are too recent for corrections - the bible still says, "This film is lost today." This not-so-new edition includes a great essay on neo-noir and a fine list of neo-noir films (although I miss the obsessive detail of the original listings). Also, it's paperbound instead of hardbound. But it's still a superb reference work for the film noir fanatic - so treat it well until Silver

and Ward get a 4th edition on the stands.

Book in great shape. Well worth the money.

This book is a reference book and not the type of book you just sit down and read for fun. It is a very comprehensive work on the film noir culture. Just about any information that you will want to know about the film noir classics will be found in this work. Fun to flip through and make a mental note of the format and where to look for your future inquiries.

Like probably every reader of this book, I am a fan of film noir, and I therefore assumed that I would like this book, which basically summarizes the plots and cast of many good-to-great film noirs. It's nice to have a book that does this, but the large number of errors in the plot summaries, and strange interpretations in the analysis, takes away somewhat from my enjoyment of the book. Some examples include: In "Detour", the author states that "Haskell and Vera are both predatory and dying of fatal diseases", when in fact neither is dying until each of them die in separate accidents. And Haskell is not "mysteriously dead" when Roberts goes to put up the convertible top; instead, he dies when he falls out of the car and hits his head on a rock. The author states that Roberts is bitter at his fiancée for going off to California, and would like to punish her, when this is not the case at all, and in fact he is on his way to California to join her. The author also indulges in some silly pseudo-psychological analysis of the movie that is way off-base, in my opinion. In "Out of the Past", the author states that Kathie is driving when she and Jeff are killed, when actually Jeff is driving. In "Double Indemnity", the author states that Neff plans to pin the murder of Phyllis on Zachette. That was his original intent. However, immediately after shooting Phyllis, he meets Zachette and tells him to go back to the good daughter Lola, who is in love with Zachette, "don't ask me why". At this point in the movie, he isn't trying to set Zachette up to take the fall, but rather trying to do the right thing for once. In another part of the book (actually in a review of *The Postman Always Rings Twice*), the author states that Phyllis declared to Walter before he shot her that she loved him, but in another part he states that she "dies without love or pity". Arguably, Phyllis didn't mean it when she told Walter she loved him, but the author never makes this point, and after all, she didn't fire the second shot that could have killed him and saved herself. There are other mistakes as well. This book could have been much better. In summary, the book seems sloppily edited and/or fact-checked, and could have been much better.

It's shameful how many mistakes are in the film narratives especially when so many "authorities" have contributed to this volume. Hopefully, later editions will see that corrections are made. That said, the list of cast members, including the bit players, is quite helpful. For readers who enjoy film noir I'd recommend anything written by Eddie Muller. He knows more about film noir than all of these hacks put together. Trust me on this and listen to the special feature film commentaries by Muller on some noir films. Most of the authorities read their boring commentaries while Muller talks off the top of his head and man are they interesting. Fun and enjoyable. Nonetheless, the book has its merits though it is rife with mistakes.

I selected "Used" and got a pre-owned item that was in very good condition. This fitted my circumstances, and I am quite satisfied with the purchase.

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