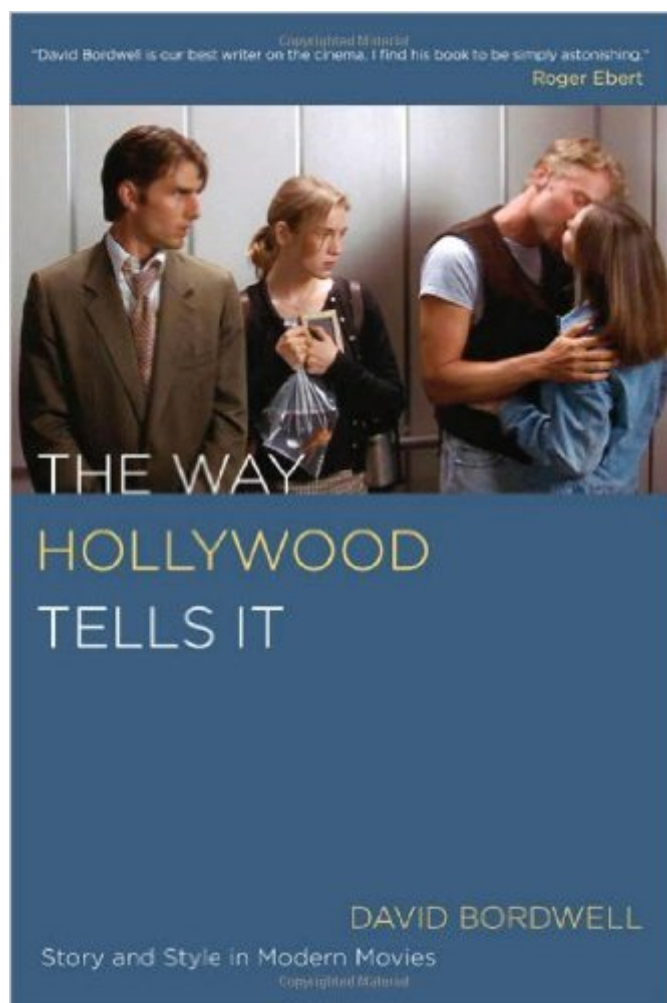


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The Way Hollywood Tells It: Story And Style In Modern Movies



Synopsis

Hollywood moviemaking is one of the constants of American life, but how much has it changed since the glory days of the big studios? David Bordwell argues that the principles of visual storytelling created in the studio era are alive and well, even in today's bloated blockbusters. American filmmakers have created a durable tradition—one that we should not be ashamed to call artistic, and one that survives in both mainstream entertainment and niche-marketed indie cinema. Bordwell traces the continuity of this tradition in a wide array of films made since 1960, from romantic comedies like *Jerry Maguire* and *Love Actually* to more imposing efforts like *A Beautiful Mind*. He also draws upon testimony from writers, directors, and editors who are acutely conscious of employing proven principles of plot and visual style. Within the limits of the "classical" approach, innovation can flourish. Bordwell examines how imaginative filmmakers have pushed the premises of the system in films such as *JFK*, *Memento*, and *Magnolia*. He discusses generational, technological, and economic factors leading to stability and change in Hollywood cinema and includes close analyses of selected shots and sequences. As it ranges across four decades, examining classics like *American Graffiti* and *The Godfather* as well as recent success like *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, this book provides a vivid and engaging interpretation of how Hollywood moviemakers have created a vigorous, resourceful tradition of cinematic storytelling that continues to engage audiences around the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like the author's other works, this is a highly meticulous and empirical study of the way

contemporary Hollywood films function. Paying close attention to selected films by intensive frame analysis, Bordwell calls into question many contemporary "sibboleths" concerning the status of "post-Hollywood" which he reveals as having more connections with its classical counterpart than most critics believe. His attention to fine detail and references to "American Cinematographer" and screenwriting manuals reveal that he has really done his homework. He challenges his contemporaries to do likewise before they engage in problematic "post" judgements whether they be on the realm of postmodernism, post-colonialism, and post- anything which may become academic equivalents of those formerly fashionable platform shoes or flared trousers that often date episodes of the 1970s British cop series THE SWEENEY. The references to contemporary Hong Kong cinema and analysis of films such as Johnny To's A HERO NEVER DIES are also valuable components of this book. Like DRAGNET's Sergeant Joe Friday, Bordwell insists that we supply facts based on viewing the evidence ourselves. We should not ignore important empirical aspects before we begin to make meanings that may eventually prove to be non-substantial. Those who choose to avoid the well-researched findings of this book should be issued with speeding tickets and forced to attend a scholarly version of "community service" or "boot camp" involving the detailed viewings of as many films as possible, reading interviews with film directors, and studying important journals such as AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER.

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