



Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert

Roger Ebert , David Bordwell (Foreword by)

Download now

Read Online ➞

Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert

Roger Ebert , David Bordwell (Foreword by)

Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert Roger Ebert , David Bordwell (Foreword by)

Roger Ebert has been writing film reviews for the *Chicago Sun-Times* for nearly forty years. And during those four decades, his wide knowledge, keen judgment, prodigious energy, and sharp sense of humor have made him America's most celebrated film critic. He was the first such critic to win a Pulitzer Prize—one of just three film critics ever to receive that honor—and the only one to have a star dedicated to him on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. His groundbreaking hit TV show, *At the Movies*, meanwhile, has made “two thumbs up” one of the most coveted hallmarks in the entire industry.

No critic alive has reviewed more movies than Roger Ebert, and yet his essential writings have never been collected in a single volume—until now. With *Awake in the Dark*, both fans and film buffs can finally bask in the best of Ebert's work. The reviews, interviews, and essays collected here present a picture of this indispensable critic's numerous contributions to the cinema and cinephilia. From *The Godfather* to *GoodFellas*, from *Cries and Whispers* to *Crash*, the reviews in *Awake in the Dark* span some of the most exceptional periods in film history, from the dramatic rise of rebel Hollywood and the heyday of the auteur, to the triumph of blockbuster films such as *Star Wars* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, to the indie revolution that is still with us today.

The extraordinary interviews gathered in *Awake in the Dark* capture Ebert engaging not only some of the most influential directors of our time—Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Woody Allen, Robert Altman, Werner Herzog, and Ingmar Bergman—but also some of the silver screen's most respected and dynamic personalities, including actors as diverse as Robert Mitchum, James Stewart, Warren Beatty, and Meryl Streep. Ebert's remarkable essays play a significant part in *Awake in the Dark* as well. The book contains some of Ebert's most admired pieces, among them a moving appreciation of John Cassavetes and a loving tribute to the virtues of black-and-white films.

If Pauline Kael and Andrew Sarris were godmother and godfather to the movie generation, then Ebert is its voice from within—a writer whose exceptional intelligence and daily bursts of insight and enthusiasm have shaped the way we think about the movies. *Awake in the Dark*, therefore, will be a treasure trove not just for fans of this seminal critic, but for anyone desiring a fascinating and compulsively readable chronicle of film since the late 1960s.

Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert Details

Date : Published September 15th 2006 by University of Chicago Press

ISBN : 9780226182001

Author : Roger Ebert , David Bordwell (Foreword by)

Format : Hardcover 512 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Culture, Film, Writing, Essays, Media Tie In, Movies

 [Download Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert Roger Ebert , David Bordwell (Foreword by)

From Reader Review Awake in the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert for online ebook

Jake Harris says

GOAT

Anna says

I know I have raved about Ebert's negative reviews before ("Your Movie Sucks" is a must-read for film buffs, or anyone who writes about popular culture or enjoys reading about it), and I was not expecting this anthology of some of his more favorable reviews to be as entertaining. This was one of those rare situations in which I was glad to be proved wrong! I may not agree with all of his positive reviews (Crash was the best film of 2005? Really?), but I always learn something when I read his work. Ebert is a fantastic writer. The one major flaw in this collection is that the "Essays and Think Pieces" section is way too short; the essay on the MPAA ratings system is, perhaps not surprisingly, just as relevant in 2011 as it presumably was in 1990 (I am not old enough to make that comparison, ha). Anyway, this is an anthology worth picking up...I hope that there is a collection of Ebert's longer essays in the works.

Ci says

I used this book to pick out movies to watch in order to learn. I don't have any informed thoughts on the author's point of view, however I appreciate his crisp and lucidity in his writing (judging by the movies I have watched in the past). I may return to this book later.

Justin says

Best of Ebert: it's a selection of reviews from his favorites and essays on film trends and film criticism generally. His writing style is quick-witted, yet clear and concise, which allows the reader a certain level of comfort and familiarity with his writing. his writing ability, love for the movies (and the University of Illinois and the Chief) make him a favorite writer of mine. of course, he also will skewer a film when necessary, and one of the lines I remember best (from his review of Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo): "But [Rob] Schneider is correct, and Patrick Goldstein [critic] has not yet won a Pulitzer Prize. Therefore, Goldstein is not qualified to complain that Columbia financed "Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo" while passing on the opportunity to participate in "Million Dollar Baby," "Ray," "The Aviator," "Sideways" and "Finding Neverland." As chance would have it, I have won the Pulitzer Prize, and so I am qualified. Speaking in my official capacity as a Pulitzer Prize winner, Mr. Schneider, your movie sucks."

Day Rusk says

It's difficult to review a book such as this. In the world of movie criticism, the late Roger Ebert loomed large, as have many others, like the late Pauline Kael. Whether you find *Awake In the Dark: The Best of Roger Ebert – Forty Years of Reviews, Essays and Interviews* interesting or not, I suppose, depends on whether or not you value Ebert's opinion. When it comes to the writing, Ebert was more than competent, writing reviews in a reader-friendly way, accessible to all.

Awake In the Dark is broken down into several sections, including one featuring interviews and profiles he conducted, along with essays and 'think' pieces regarding films and filmmakers, and essays on film criticism. Along with all of that, we're treated to Ebert's reviews of what he considers the best films from 1967 to 2005; a look at memorable foreign films and documentaries, and my favorite section, films Ebert, as a critic, felt were overlooked and underrated (this to me, always gives you an interesting insight into the reviewer's tastes).

One aspect in reading *Awake In the Dark* that I did take away, is that despite unexpectedly falling into the job of film critic (there is a brief autobiographical introduction on Ebert's life), Ebert embraced his fate and did all he could to learn about film, its history and technique, so that in presenting his views, he was doing so from a position of authority and appreciation. What you get from these interviews, reviews and essays is a love of the cinema and the art of moviemaking that the man developed and shared with us for decades.

Awake In the Dark, as it doesn't require you to follow a specific narrative, is one of those books you can pick up and read, put down for a while and get back to, without losing anything. It is also a book that will prompt you to seek out movies you haven't seen, that are featured, or re-watch those you have, based on Ebert's perspective. Either way, you'll benefit and have a great time doing so.

I personally worked as an entertainment writer for almost three decades, and while I had no problem with the interview and profile piece, I must admit, I never felt I developed a true voice for the writing of movie reviews, so take it from me, what you're reading is not something that was thrown together and easy to do, but writing that required thought, analysis and perspective to pull off properly; Roger Ebert mastered that, and as such, *Awake In the Dark* is worth adding to the book shelf of anyone who even slightly considers themselves a cinephile.

Parksy says

Reading his reviews making me want to watch movies immediately! His passion is contagious. His reviews are always bang on!

_____ -

From Booklist

Ebert, probably the most prolific film critic of all time, here distills his massive life's work into a single volume. After a nostalgic introduction recounting his initial forays into criticism, he presents reviews of the best films of each of the past 38 years, from *Bonnie and Clyde* to *Crash*, and a selection of foreign films, documentaries, and "overlooked and underrated" works. More compelling are longer "think pieces" on such topics as colorization, the movie-ratings system, digital projection, and *Star Wars'* deleterious effect on Hollywood. Those, and a selection of star profiles and interviews, allow him to share his expertise and voice his passion in a fashion that daily reviewing seldom permits. The volume's final selection, a 2004 piece about

the healing effect of viewing movies--and of writing about them--during his convalescence from cancer treatment, may well serve as his valedictory. As film criticism becomes more marginalized, Ebert may come to be seen as the last of a kind--the critic who actually has the power to influence a national audience.

Gordon Flagg

Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Product Description

Roger Ebert has been writing film reviews for the Chicago Sun-Times for over forty years. In fact, no critic alive has reviewed more movies than he has. Yet his essential writings have never been collected in a single volume—until now. With *Awake in the Dark*, both fans and film buffs can finally bask in the best of Ebert's work. The reviews, interviews, and essays collected here present a picture of his numerous contributions to the cinema and cinephilia. From *The Godfather* to *GoodFellas*, from *Cries and Whispers* to *Crash*, the reviews in *Awake in the Dark* span some of the most exceptional periods in film history.

In addition, the extraordinary interviews gathered in *Awake in the Dark* capture Ebert engaging not only some of the most influential directors of our time—Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Woody Allen, Robert Altman, Werner Herzog, and Ingmar Bergman—but also some of the silver screen's most respected personalities, including actors as diverse as Robert Mitchum, James Stewart, Warren Beatty, and Meryl Streep.

America's most celebrated film critic, Ebert is a writer whose exceptional intelligence and bursts of insight have shaped the way we think about the movies. *Awake in the Dark* will be a treasure trove not just for fans of this seminal critic but for anyone desiring a fascinating and compulsively readable chronicle of film since the late 1960s.

"As film criticism becomes more marginalized, Ebert may come to be seen as the last of a kind—the critic who actually has the power to influence a national audience."—Booklist

"[Ebert's:] writing is top-notch. In *Awake in the Dark*, Ebert has produced his most personal collection of reviews, essays, and interviews, providing insights into the man as much as the movies he loves. . . . This volume contains some of Ebert's most exciting writing."—Gary Kramer, *Filmbill*

Erik Kalm says

Roger Ebert has always been my favorite film critic. Regardless of his feelings about the movie in question his reviews are always well written and actually SAY something. For example, I will never forget the beginning of his review of *Star Wars - The Phantom Menace*. Most every other critic was trashing it, but Ebert wrote:

"If it were the first 'Star Wars' movie, 'The Phantom Menace' would be hailed as a visionary breakthrough. But this is the fourth movie of the famous series, and we think we know the territory; many of the early reviews have been blase, paying lip service to the visuals and wondering why the characters aren't better developed. How quickly do we grow accustomed to wonders. I am reminded of the Isaac Asimov story 'Nightfall,' about the planet where the stars were visible only once in a thousand years. So awesome was the sight that it drove men mad. We who can see the stars every night glance up casually at the cosmos and then quickly down again, searching for a Dairy Queen."

Wow. He really got it, I figured. No cynicism in that review. Total joy in the experience of watching that movie.

Well, this caliber of reviewing is what Ebert does best. And this book, a collection of reviews from over the

last 30+ years is a fascinating read for any movie lover. Many reviews brought back memories, good and bad, from years gone by. Some movies I decided I need to see right away. Others, held no interest at all. But the reviews are always worth reading.

This is a must have book for any true movie lover!

Annabelle says

Like all of Ebert's books, this one's going to be reread a couple of times in my lifetime. Reading or rereading, I learn so much from him. Even more important, I ENJOY him!

Ken Lindholm says

A very enjoyable book about movies, consisting of both essays and columns on individual films. Roger Ebert was not my favorite film critic because our tastes didn't align as closely as they did with other critics, but he was a terrific writer so I enjoyed reading about movies that I had not seen for many years (causing me to go and revisit some of these films). The essays cover directors, stars and Roger's general ponderings on film. I've found the book a great late evening read, best savored in small doses.

John Orman says

For the movie lover and nostalgia buff, this book is a gold mine! Forty years of Ebert's movie reviews, essays, and interviews with the stars of cinema.

In his very early critic years, he called both "Bonnie and Clyde" and "2001: A Space Odyssey" masterpieces when the majority of critics were panning them. It was also 1968 when the young Roger interviewed both Jimmy Stewart and Lee Marvin.

Many big films are reviewed here--The Godfather, Apocalypse Now, Sophie's Choice, and Amadeus. But it is Ebert's insights about humanity delivered in reviews of smaller movies like My Dinner with Andre that show the long-term value of films in general.

I loved the review of Being John Malkovich almost as much as the movie! "Every once in a long, long while, a movie comes along that is like no other. A movie that creates a new world for us, and uses it to produce wonderful things."

The book finishes off with a list of "The Most Influential Films of the Century." No surprises with "Citizen Kane" or "Star Wars", but Ebert actually makes a somewhat convincing case that "The Blair Witch Project" is important because its origination now puts film making into the hands of anyone with serious motivation, and audiences will respond even to a movie without traditional production values.

Ebert is still the go-to-guy for me when trying to decide whether a movie unknown to me will ultimately be

worth my time!

Helen says

This book by one of the most famous film critics is terrific. With a career spanning over 50 years, Ebert's interviews with top directors and actors are so conversational and unforced that a very personal and human quality comes forward. Favourite interviews are with Woody Allen who confesses that he wishes he was the 'the genius' Marlon Brando and Ebert's rare interview with Ingmar Bergman on the Swedish island of Faro.

Nancy says

I think Roger Ebert is an informed and generous critic, and I like that about him. He tries not to be mean just for the sake of it, but if something needs a hammer applied, well. Anyway, this is a book that includes his original reviews--not the ones in his *Great Movies* series--for his best films of the past 35 years or so, along with celebrity interviews, a few documentary reviews, and some essays.

I didn't read every bit of this--I am profoundly uninterested in criticism on film criticism (making this review nicely ironic), for example.

Roz Milner says

If pressed to name a movie critic, most people would probably say Roger Ebert.

Even though he hasn't hosted the show he made famous in some years – indeed, he no longer can speak – he remains (and likely will remain for some time) the most famous critic of his time.

I recently finished a collection of his writings, *Awake in the Dark*, which reinforces that conclusion. While the book is primarily made of film reviews (which I'll get to later), it's the other sections that shine the most.

If Ebert is a good critic, he's an even better essayist. Here he tackles the MPAA, Ted Turner and the colorization of film (an issue that Ebert likely helped defeat), digital projection and why the Oscars reward some movies over others.

A real treat in the book is an extended discussion on the state of film criticism, presented in a series of essays by Ebert, Richard Corless and Andrew Sarris. It's an interesting look at two differing schools of thought on how criticism works and where it's headed – Corless argues that shows like Siskel and Ebert are moving film criticism away from actual discussion to quick bursts of information and “if it's any good” talk that spells out your taste for you.

A section of his profiles is a little more uneven. His looks at Woody Allen feels odd with the added benefit of hindsight and his piece where he drives around with Robert Mitchum doesn't really go anywhere (much like Mitchum's driving).

But others offer an interesting look inside the creative process. His piece on Ingmar Bergman takes you inside a closed set, where Bergman only filmed with the people who absolutely needed to be there. His piece on Tom Hanks examines what makes Hanks such a versatile and popular actor when people barely even know the real Hanks – without actually speaking to his subject.

His astute ability at breaking down not only why a movie, a character or a director is successful, but at how they impact the viewer is superb – few critics can really explain why things work like Ebert does, in simple terms that anybody can understand. These profiles often show this in exquisite detail. When he really clicks on a subject, it's great reading.

The bulk of this book is a massive collection of reviews, 76 in all. The editors of the book wisely chose to go with Ebert's original reviews when possible (some of them curiously brief). This gives the book a sense of immediacy his other collections don't have. These pieces, written around the time of the movie's premiere, offer an unvarnished look at each movie before the public reached a mass opinion.

It's interesting to see how he reacted to movies like *The Godfather*, *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Do The Right Thing* upon their original release. And it feels more honest to see this original reaction, not how he feels looking back.

The book doesn't stick to just "classic" movies either. It offers a selection at world film, with reviews that range from Ozu's *Tokyo Story*, Herzog's *Stroszek* and Satyajit Ray's *The Music Room*. These reviews offer a quick primer on world cinema and showcase that Ebert is interested in more than just the blockbusters.

There are also sections on documentaries – including several reviews of the *Up* series of movies – and on films Ebert thinks are either underrated or overlooked. His take at the works of Sam Peckinpah or the great car chase in *To Live and Die in LA* show that more than anything else, Ebert is somebody who genuinely likes movies.

It feels at times like by writing, Ebert is trying to share his enthusiasm with the reader, make it clear not that a movie is good (or bad) but that it's worth your time. Ebert writes that film is a medium to be enjoyed and to be shared; what fun is it to watch a movie by yourself?

On the whole, *Awake in the Dark* serves as a great overview for Ebert's career and a great look at how movies have evolved in the past 40 years. More than that, it shows the evolution of Ebert as a film critic – by taking one review from each year he wrote, you can really see how much he's grown and further appreciate how lucky his readers are. For anybody interested not just in Ebert, but also in film, this book is must-read.

Michelle says

Roger Ebert has a way of writing about films that will make you smile, it will make you want to stop what your doing and watch whatever he's gushing about, his enthusiasm is infectious. As a film major I love reading his stuff but I think that even if your remotely interested in movies this will help you see them in a new light and appreciate all that goes into them.

LeShane says

Roger Ebert is, by far, my favorite critic and journalist. This book was interesting because he included a few think pieces he wrote about the movie industry. My favorite being his case for and 'A' rating in movies for adults only. His argument isn't that complicated and it completely explained the absurdities of the current movie rating system.

Another great piece was his review of the Color Purple and his writings on why it was snubbed at the Oscars. The politics of the Oscars are so interesting...

That said...read this book. Roger Ebert has a black wife so it's cool...
