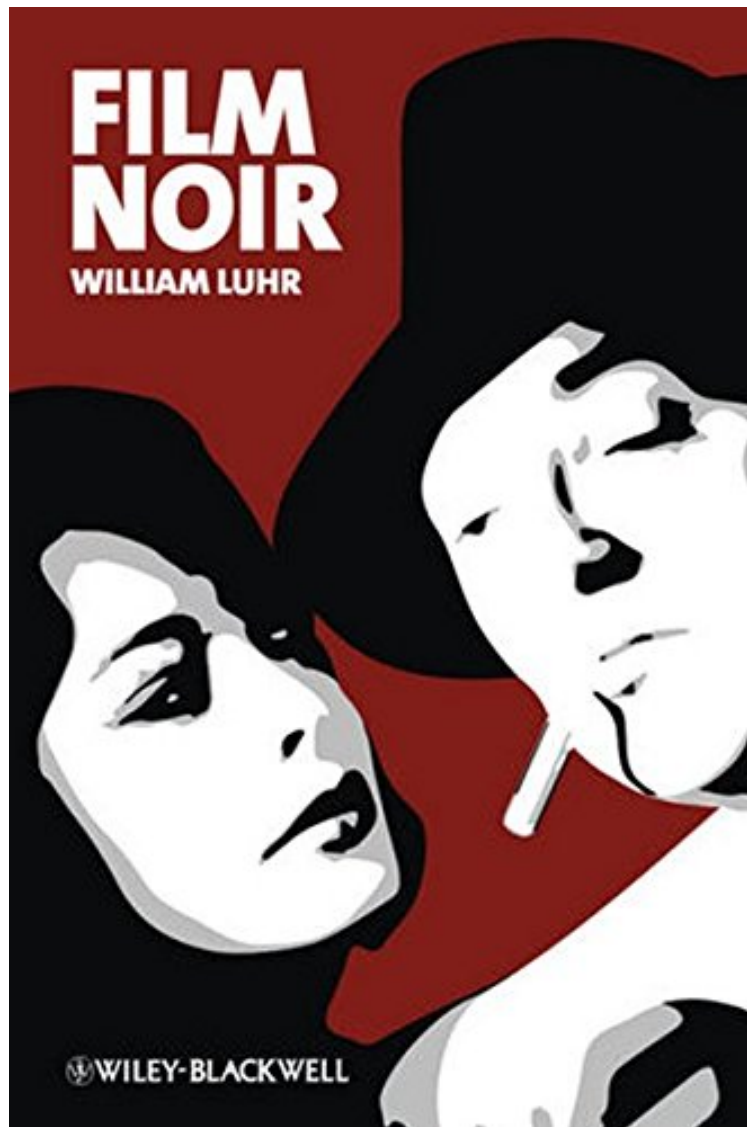


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Film Noir

William Luhr

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William Luhr : Film Noir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Film Noir:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Smart and EngagingBy Dr Mitchell EarleywineI was completely bowled over by this one. Other books on noir waste a ton of time with academic dolphin-flogging about what is and isn't part of the genre, quoting literary critics that no one cares about, and deriding every flick made after 1959. This one is a joy to read, focuses closely on a handful of films, and clearly shows the author's love for the cinema. The in-depth looks at a few well-chosen movies provide key points of each plot, intelligent commentary on photography, and

insightful connections between each film and the spirit of its time. The author does an outstanding job placing each work in the context of others that are in the genre as well as many from other eras and categories. Instead of rehashing the usual gossip about each film (or overly-familiar yarns about Chandler's drunkenness and Bogart's first wife) we get relevant, delightful stories of unsung artists like Leigh Brackett and Daniel Mainwaring. Frequent, germane references to a rich collection of other films and other books reveal the depth and richness of the author's knowledge. He does all this in about 200 pages of engaging prose, igniting anyone's love of noir and discussions about it, and by extension, the love for art in general. I challenge anyone to finish it unchanged, lacking a desire to watch a movie with the author, or without a list of at least a dozen flicks to watch and half a dozen books to read.

Film Noir offers new perspectives on this highly popular and influential film genre, providing a useful overview of its historical evolution and the many critical debates over its stylistic elements. Brings together a range of perspectives on a topic that has been much discussed but remains notoriously ill-defined. Traces the historical development of the genre, usefully exploring the relations between the films of the 1940s and 1950s that established the "noir" universe and the more recent films in which it has been frequently revived. Employs a clear and intelligent writing style that makes this the perfect introduction to the genre. Offers a thorough and engaging analysis of this popular area of film studies for students and scholars. Presents an in-depth analysis of six key films, each exemplifying important trends of film noir: *Murder, My Sweet*; *Out of the Past*; *Kiss Me Deadly*; *The Long Goodbye*; *Chinatown*; and *Seven*

It is the most comprehensive and lucid study of the genre I have read. I was also impressed with Luhr's handling of the shift in Hollywood from the 1930s to 1940s. The morally compromised "heroes" of the 1940s were unthinkable in the 1930s. Like all good film critics, Luhr makes me want to see my favorite films again because he has shown me things I missed. And then there are all those films I didn't see that are now on my list because of William Luhr. (Carl Rollyson, 16 June 2012) "A superb guide to the main streets, back alleys, penthouses and abandoned lots of film noir. A comprehensive survey of canonical movies, written with a fan's eye for noir's killer-cool and an academic's desire for contextual precision and analytical insight." Peter Stanfield, University of Kent "William Luhr is the intrepid sleuth of cinema studies, tracking down film noir under all the aliases classic noir, pre-noir, neo-noir that its infinite variety has produced. Writing with energy, clarity, and verve, Luhr explodes narrow conceptions of noir as conclusively as the Great Whatsit blew up postwar innocence in *Kiss Me Deadly*. Carry a copy of this timely, spirited book in your trenchcoat. It is a boon for film scholars, general readers, and movie buffs alike." David Sterritt, Chairman, National Society of Film Critics "Informed by a rich body of previous scholarship, conceptually sophisticated, yet written with grace and clarity, *Film Noir* by William Luhr provides an ideal introduction for students and fans to the dark corner of American culture represented by these gloriously perverse crime films." Jerry W. Carlson, PhD, The City College Graduate Center CUNY "William Luhr, who knows all the many questions raised by film noir, supplies lucid, elegant, provocative answers. His knowledge is deep, his comments far-ranging. This is an essential addition to the vast literature on the genre." Charles Affron, New York University "Writing with broad expertise and deep sensibility, Professor Luhr heightens our nostalgic delight in noir films while also pointing to the lost spectatorial experience of film noir's once present tenseness." Chris Straayer, New York University Department of Cinema Studies From the Back Cover *Film Noir* is the first book to survey this delightfully depraved and highly popular cinematic world, populated by shady characters flawed by moral imperfections. The volume provides a valuable overview of the historical evolution of this genre; it teases out the critical debates over generic and stylistic elements, and charts film noir from its inception in the post-War period through to contemporary times. From *Double Indemnity* to *Devil With a Blue Dress*, *Murder, My Sweet* to *Mulholland Falls* and *Woman at the Window* to *Usual Suspects*, *Film Noir* enables readers to move chronologically through a cinematic world at once shadowy and seductive. Luhr brings together a range of perspectives on a topic that has been widely discussed but remains notoriously vague. He explores the relationship between the films of the 1940s and 1950s that established the "noir" universe and the more recent films in which it has been frequently revived. The result is a text that brings a thorough and engaging analysis of this popular area of film studies for both for students and scholars.