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A History Of Narrative Film (Fifth Edition)



Synopsis

A trusted reference, a popular teaching text, and a well-written history is now bolder, briefer, and better than ever. Sophisticated in its analytical content, current in its coverage, and informed throughout by fascinating historical and cultural contexts, *A History of Narrative Film* is one of the most respected and widely read texts in film studies. This Fifth Edition features a new chapter on twenty-first century film, and includes refreshed coverage of contemporary digital production, distribution, and consumption of film. Now 20% shorter, with new four-color design and an updated art program, *A History of Narrative Film* is also the only film history text available as an ebook.

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Customer Reviews

Choosing a textbook for a two-semester world film course is no easy trick, of the three I have used Cook, Thompson/Bordwell, and Mast/Kawin, I am most happy with Cook. Thompson/Bordwell covers film more broadly with great investment in documentary and experimental film and useful nods towards animation. Mast/Kawin offers much of the same, but the writing strikes me as even more encyclopedic than Thompson/Bordwell, which leads me to my problem with Thompson/Bordwell (and Mast/Kawin). Although Thompson and Bordwell make arguments throughout their book (for example, the discussion of French impressionism), there is no sustained argument. Cook's *A History of Narrative Film* offers a historical argument regarding narrative's development and ongoing significance to film as a medium. Using Cook in my classroom allows me to show how critical thinking is as important in writing history as information gathering. In class, I have something to press against in order for my students to understand history as something both

subjective and objective, as both evidence and reasoning. However, since Cook doesn't invest as much in non-narrative film or animation, I need to pick up those topics, especially experimental film, which exists largely outside my students' cultural sphere. This is hardly onerous work. For the 5th edition, Cook has cleaned up the text considerably, shunting many of what I called the laundry lists found in earlier editions to an online site. It's still a brick of a book, however, and no fun to carry back and forth to school, especially on a bicycle. Cook has expanded coverage of Eastern European, Nigerian, Thai, and recent American independent cinema. And he's also addressed developments with digital and 3D technologies.

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