

Finding Background Information

When beginning a research project, it's always a great idea to start by looking at background information. This will help you focus your topic and put it in a proper context. Also, searching for background information will often lead you to suggestions for further research, so it's an excellent use of your time. Some general film encyclopedias available at Dayton Memorial Library (DML) include:

- Critical Dictionary of Film and Television Theory* (Reference PN 1993.45 .C75 2001)
- Encyclopedia of British Film* (Reference PN 1993.5 .G7 E53 2003)
- Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film* (Reference PN 1995.9 .D6 E53 2006, 3 vols.)
- Encyclopedia of European Cinema* (Reference PN 1992.5 .E8 V56 1995)
- Film Studies Dictionary* (Reference PN 1993.45 .B49 2001)
- Guide to British Cinema* (Reference PN 1993.5 .G7 M327 2003)
- New Biographical Dictionary of Film* (Reference PN 1998.2 .T49 2002)
- New Historical Dictionary of the American Film Industry*
(Reference PN 1993.5 .U6 S539 1998)
- Oxford History of World Cinema* (Reference PN 1993.5 .A1 O96 1995)
- Women's Companion to International Film* (Reference PN 1993.45 W6 1994)
- World History of Film* (Reference PN 1993.5 .A1 S555 2002)

Other subject encyclopedias may be identified by searching the library's catalog (Lumen) using the keywords:

- **motion pictures dictionaries (or encyclopedias)**

It's helpful to know a few things about your film before you can research it, such as:

- ✓ the exact title of the film and any English translation;
- ✓ the year the film was released;
- ✓ the director's name;
- ✓ and the country in which the film was originally released.

This information may be found at online at the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) at <http://www.imdb.com>.

Finding Plot Summaries

Although watching a film is a great way to learn about the plot, you may have a hard time finding a copy of the film for viewing. Also, getting an outside perspective may help you understand complex films or bring up issues that had not occurred to you. While the IMDb may include plot summaries, these are often written by the general public and are not necessarily reliable, nor may they provide enough information for your purposes. Older films may not be represented at all. If you find yourself needing more information, try the following titles in DML that summarize plots:

- The American Movies Reference Book: The Sound Era* (Reference PN 1993.5 .U6 M53)
- British Film Institute Film Classics* (Reference PN 1995 .B75 2003, 2 vols.)
- Enser's Filmed Books and Plays...(1928-1991)* (Reference Z 5784 .M9 B385 1993)

Halliwell's Film & Video Guide (Reference PN 1993.45 .H344 1997)
Halliwell's Filmgoer's and Video Viewer's Companion
(Reference PN 1993.45 .H28 1993)
Magill's Survey of Cinema: English Language Films
(Reference PN 1993.45 .M3 + .M32 (1st + 2nd ser.))
Magill's Survey of Cinema: Foreign Language Films
(Reference PN 1995.9 .F67 M34 1985)
Screen World (Reference PN 1993.3 .D3 1959-1968; 1973-present)
[note: lists all films produced worldwide each year]
Variety International Film Guide
(Reference PN 1993.3 .I544 2005; earlier years on 3rd floor)

For almost 500 select films, another option is to look at the actual script in the **American Film Scripts Online** database (available through the library's A-Z database list under the Research section). You can browse the list of titles and subjects, search for characters (including options like sexual orientation and gender), or search for writers and films based on your own interests. Click on the search category names for tips on how to maximize your results. Another 500 scripts will be added over time, so check back for the latest updates.

Finding Film Reviews

Film reviews discuss the film's plot and the reviewer's opinion of the film. Reviews are not the same as film criticism, which will be discussed later. Reviews are generally published in magazines and newspapers, so the fastest way to find reviews is through the use of magazine and newspaper indexes, as well as online sources. Keep in mind that some of the online sources depend upon reviews from the general public, so you may find more authoritative reviews in traditional sources. Online indexes (listed in **bold**) are available through the library's A-Z database list under the Research section. Coverage varies by individual journal titles, with most starting in the 1990s:

Academic Search Premier.

Expanded Academic ASAP.

General Reference Center.

LexisNexis Academic. Includes last 20 years of the *New York Times*.

For older films, you may have to consult paper indexes (shelved in the Reference Collection):

Humanities Index (REF AI 3 .H85). Covers 1974-1997.

New York Times Index (REF AI 21. N45). To identify reviews from the *New York Times*, look under the film title or the heading, "Motion Pictures".

Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature (REF AI 3 .R 48). Covers 1901-present. Look under "Motion Pictures". Earlier years use the term "Moving-Pictures". Useful for finding reviews of older films.

Film reviews are often compiled into books or databases for easier access. Some books include:

Connoisseur's Guide to the Movies (3rd Floor Books PN 1995 .M567 1985).

Film Review (Reference PN 1993 .F624 1970-present).

Film Review Index (Reference PN 1995 .F513, vols. 1-2). Covers 1882-1985.

The New York Times Film Reviews (Reference PN 1995 .N4 1913-present).

[Also available online through 2001 in the **New York Times Backfile**.]

Two of the best Internet databases are:

Critics.com <http://www.critics.com>

[note: compares reviews from major critics, with links to the original reviews]

Internet Movie Database (IMDb) <http://www.imdb.com>

Finding Film Criticism

Film criticism is scholarly material that analyzes, interprets, or evaluates the characters and/or the technical or thematic aspects of film. Film criticism may be published in books or in scholarly journals. To find film criticism in journals, use one of the following indexes:

Academic Search Premier. Coverage varies by title. You may limit your search to “Scholarly (Peer-Reviewed) Articles” as part of your search.

Expanded Academic Index. Coverage varies by title. You may limit your search to scholarly articles if you select “Refereed Publications” as part of your search.

For older films, consult these print indexes:

Art Index (Reference AI 3 .A7). Covers 1929-1999.

Humanities Index (Reference AI 3 .H85). Covers 1974-1997.

Finding Books at DML

For books with film criticism, or general books on film, you may try a keyword search in the library’s catalog (Lumen) for the film’s title and include one of the following terms:

- **cinema**
- **motion pictures**
- **moving pictures**
- **criticism**

Looking up People "in the Movies"

These sources will help you find information about various people in the film industry:

International Directory of Films and Filmmakers: Films, Filmmakers, Actors & Actresses, Writers & Production Artists (Reference PN 1997.8 I58 2000, 4 vols.)

Cinematographers, Production Designers, Costume Designers & Film Editors Guide (Reference PN 1998 .A1 C58 1991)

Film Producers, Studios, Agents and Casting Directors Guide (Reference PN 1998 .A1 F484)

Movie Characters of Leading Performers of the Sound Era (Reference PN 1995.9 .C36 N69 1990)

Women Filmmakers and Their Films (Reference PN 1998.2 .W66 1998)

Independent Filmmaking

With the growing popularity of indie films and filmmakers, you may want to consult the following:

Encyclopedia of American Independent Filmmaking (Reference PN 1993.45 .L63 2002)

The Independent Film & Videomakers Guide (Reference PN 1995.9 .P7 W5 1986)

For other books in DML, search the library’s catalog using keywords like:

- **motion pictures production**
- **moving pictures production**

Special Topics

Countless additional resources are available on specialized aspects of film. A few examples:

- Bad Boys: The Actors of Film Noir* (Reference PN 1998.2 .H36 2003)
Blacks in American Movies: A Selected Bibliography (Reference Z 5784 .M9 P69)
Cine y Mujer en América Latina: Directoras de Largometrajes de Ficción
(Reference PN 1998.2 .T75 1991)
Cyborgs, Santa Claus and Satan: Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films Made for Television (Reference PN 1995.9 .S26 S46 2000)
Encyclopedia of Alfred Hitchcock (Reference PN 1998.3 .H58 L45 2002)
Encyclopedia of Horror Movies (Reference PN 1995.9 .H6 M5 1986)
Encyclopedia of Stanley Kubrick (Reference PN 1998.3 .K83 H55 2002)
Encyclopedia of the Musical Film (Reference PN 1995.9 .M86 G7)
Filmography of Social Issues (Reference PN 1995.9 .S62 M58 2004)
Hollywood War Films, 1937-1945 (Reference D 743.23 .S55 1996)
Movies Made for Television (Reference PN 1992.8 .F5 M35 1984)
Strong, Silent Type: Over 100 Screen Cowboys, 1903-1930
(Reference PN 1995.9 .W4 R344 2004)
Ultimate Guide to Lesbian and Gay Film and Video
(Reference PN 1995.9 .H55 U48 1996)
Vitaphone Films (Reference PN 1999 .V55 L54 2003)

Identifying Information Beyond the Regis Libraries

Searching the online catalogs of other libraries can turn up a wealth of information. You can use the Prospector system to identify and request books from area libraries. Consult a reference librarian for assistance in using Prospector. In addition, consulting bibliographies help you identify standard works on your topic that might not be in DML. Some bibliographies are:

- Cinema Booklist* (Reference Z 5784 .M9 R42 + Suppl.)
The Critical Index: A Bibliography of Articles on Film in English, 1946-1973
(Reference Z 5784 .M9 G47)
Film Study: An Analytical Bibliography (Reference PN 1994 .M34 1990)
Guidebook to Film (Reference Z 5784 .M9 G66)

For a selection of recommended web sites on film studies, please see the Communication subject guide on the library web site, then look for the Film and Television Studies under the **recommended web sites** section.

Research Consultation Appointments

If you encounter questions or difficulties during your research, do not hesitate to ask a reference librarian for assistance, or call ahead for an appointment (303-458-4031). You can also e-mail us at library@regis.edu or chat with us 24/7 using the **Ask Us!** virtual reference service.

Reference Desk Hours:	Monday-Thursday:	9 a.m. - 10 p.m.
	Friday:	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
	Saturday:	9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
	Sunday:	12:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Remember, the librarians are here to help – all you have to do is ask!

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