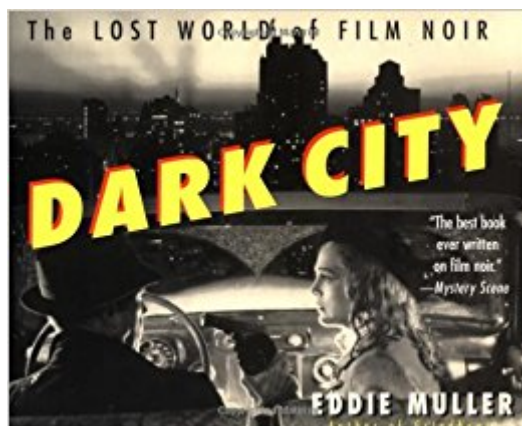


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Dark City: The Lost World Of Film Noir



Synopsis

Welcome to Dark City, urban landscape of the imagination. A place where the men and women who created film noir often find themselves dangling from the same sinister heights as the silver-screen avatars to whom they gave life. Eddie Muller, who led readers on a guided tour of the seamier side of motion pictures in *Grindhouse: The Forbidden World of 'Adults Only' Cinema*, now takes us on a spellbinding trip through treacherous terrain: Hollywood in the post-World War II years, when art, politics, scandal, style--and brilliant craftsmanship--produced a new approach to moviemaking, and a new type of cultural mythology. *Dark City* is a 1999 Edgar Award Nominee for Best Critical / Biographical Work.

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Customer Reviews

Of several recent books on film noir, this one is the least academic. Muller is clearly a fan and relishes the opportunity to hang out with a few of his favorite lost souls from what he calls *Dark City*. The book is organized around the city motif, with chapters devoted to various thematic neighborhoods, for example, "The Precinct" (cop flicks) and "Vixenville" (femme fatales). This metaphor seems a bit labored at times, and Muller's plot summaries tend to run on, but otherwise film noir fans will have plenty to enjoy here. The illustrations, mostly stills, are first rate, and the mix of biographical, historical, and critical material works well. Background on such vintage noir actors as Robert Ryan, Richard Widmark, and, of course, Robert Mitchum is usually fresh and pertinent, and the insider gossip about life in the studios adds some zip. Nicholas Christopher's *Somewhere in the Night* remains the best critical study, but this more-browsable volume provides an entertaining

all-around introduction to the genre. Bill Ott

• The best book ever written on film noir. • Mystery Scene • Eddie Muller seriously takes film noir not too seriously--just the right mix, and with great stills. • Paul Schrader • Dark City is a thoroughly enjoyable companion to the unique, sometimes twisted pleasures of film noir, from acknowledged classics like *Out of the Past* to lesser-known gems like *Born to Kill* and *The Chase*. In a genre where some see mostly fatalism and social critique, Eddie Muller also finds humor, eroticism, and the unfettered inventiveness of an extraordinary generation of directors and actors. • Geoffrey O'Brien, author of *The Phantom Empire* • This ultimate companion to gritty black-and-white postwar classics reveals that the dark stars led desperate, nefarious lives both on-screen and off. • Details • Even if you aren't a film buff, you'll probably find *Dark City* compelling. . . . Muller's plot summaries and insider accounts of moviemaking are fitting companions to the brooding images that accompany them. • the Washington Post • A pictorial anthology on the American existentialist crime movie . . . rich in background anecdotes and the argot of the genre. • San Francisco Examiner • Dig it: Eddie Muller's *Dark City* is a righteous, rip-snorting riff on the ultimate cinematic genre--film noir. This book displays a salutary knowledge of the underpinnings of the genre; serves as a fabulous reference book; and most importantly, dishes the real life dirt on the freaks, geeks, commies, nymphos, hopheads, has-beens, red-baiters, and all-purpose fiends who made this genre great. • James Ellroy

Check out the author on "Noir Alley" on TV where he comments on the movie, shows the movie, and then add more comment after the movie. He mentioned his book and I had to get it. It was better than I expected. I use the book as a guide to find movies on that I want to buy. I love Film Noir. I have been interested since I saw "House on 92nd Street" in the 1950's. At that time I wanted to become a Federal Agent just like Inspector Briggs (Lloyd Nolan). I never reached the FBI but I did end up doing 30 years as "La Migra" on the mean streets of LA. Yes, I have no pride in the city and that is why I don't say Los Angeles. The author uses Hard Boiled style language to make the stories not just interesting but fascinating. He dishes dirt on the stars--the story you haven't heard. I do wish he had made a list of the titles and the dates released so I could have a shopping guide. should team up with Muller and have a special section for Noir and have the titles for sale. .

I plan to go through this book again and have a pencil and paper ready to write down the movies for future acquisition. The content is very good and so are the photographs and the poster gallery at the

end. The reason that I did not write down movies as I read it the first time is that it is chock full of information about the movies and the actors and the background. Pondering the acquisition of movies would detract from the reading experience and can be slightly overwhelming if you read it when you are tired. I favor odd film noir and am not into quantity in this genre. See my review of "Hell Bound." Therefore, that makes the task of choosing a movie more difficult. Reviewer Shell is correct. The book is written like a Noir novel.

Its noir on noir. Intoxicating, dark and beautiful. Loving it. Nice review of themes and players in the noir world. The plot summaries of the movies tend to blend together as another reviewer noted. I still like it but sometimes you just have to skip ahead.

Great experience! This gently used (very good) collectible (signed by author) book arrived in 4 days from Palo Alto, CA to Atlanta, GA. Looks perfect. Better than described - as a fan of "film noir" - can't wait to dive right in and digest all of Eddie Muller's research and insights.

Eddie Muller knows what he's writing about. He's one of the finest experts on film noir alive. And, yes, this book is superb in its writing with many wonderful pictures that make it a joy for a quick scan or to slowly peruse. Nevertheless, it seems disappointing on several levels: 1) There are too many plot synopses to the point I actually had to skip a few paragraphs if it was about a noir I hadn't seen; 2) the book seems poorly structured -- actually at times more like a novel; and 3) there isn't one single photo of Jane Greer, one of the finest femme fatales, in the entire book! Admittedly, it's a good book and worth your money. But a definitive reference book it is not.

Every once in a while, a book comes along that is nearly perfect--a book so good that even the most critical reader should find nothing in it to gripe about, and that really fits into the "must-have" category. Eddie Muller's "Dark City: The Lost World of Film Noir" is such a book. With that said, you need to know what it is NOT: it is NOT a heavily footnoted academic treatise on the uniquely mid-20th-century American cinematic crime film genre for which the French coined the term "film noir." There are other books out there if you're interested in scholarly film criticism. "Dark City" IS a celebration, in words and pictures, of the dark, brooding, stylish, fatalistic crime dramas, mainly from the 1940s, that critics today justly regard as some of the finest films the American movie industry has ever produced. An acknowledged expert on the subject of film noir, and whose commentary tracks appear on many noir DVD releases, Eddie Muller really knows what he's talking about, and

his enthusiasm for his subject is clear and infectious. Written in an irreverent, wisecracking style seemingly straight from the mouths of memorable noir characters such as Humphrey Bogart's hard-boiled detective Sam Spade in "The Maltese Falcon" ("When you're slapped, you'll take it and like it!"), "Dark City" is a superb treatment of film noir that is both an excellent introduction for the novice and an entertaining review for the aficionado. Illustrated throughout with outstanding, well-chosen and -captioned black-and-white images, and with very high production values, "Dark City" is an excellent addition to the library of even the most casual film noir fan. If you enjoy watching the movies, you can't help but enjoy this book. Now please excuse me, I have to go pop "This Gun for Hire" into the DVD player...

It's hard to put this book down if you love film noir. Fantastic read, wonderful high quality photos and pictures. Sit down late in the evening with a reading light in an otherwise dark room, sink into a comfortable chair and return to the mysterious days of film noir to meet the shameless, shady, pathetic but emotionally understandable characters of the dark city.

Love film noir , so I just had to get this book.

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