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Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde*

Few films in the history of American cinema caused more intense critical discussion and greater emotional debate than Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde*. This provocative portrayal of Depression-era life on the run, delivered with visual panache and a hip sensibility, ushered in what came to be categorized as "the New American Cinema." Focusing on a story set in the 1930s, yet clearly fashioned to resonate with the countercultural tenor of the 1960s, the film remains compelling for today's viewers by virtue of its central love story and inevitable tragedy, its subversive statement and its sympathetic connection to the communal impulse. This volume includes freshly commissioned essays by leading scholars of Arthur Penn's work, as well as contributions from Penn himself and scriptwriter David Newman. They analyze the cultural history, technical brilliance, visual strategies, and violent imagery that marked *Bonnie and Clyde* as a significant turning point in American cinema.

Lester D. Friedman teaches humanities at the SUNY Health Science Center and film at Syracuse University. He writes about multicultural issues, medical humanities, British film and culture, and American cinema.

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LESTER D. FRIEDMAN
Syracuse University



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32 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10013-2473, USA

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521592956

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First published 2000

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* / edited by Lester D. Friedman.

p. cm. – (Cambridge film handbooks series)

Filmography: p.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-59295-X – ISBN 0-521-59697-1 (pbk.)

1. *Bonnie and Clyde* (Motion picture) I. Friedman, Lester D.

II. Series.

PN1997.B6797 1999

791.43'72 – dc21 98-32173

CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-59295-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-59697-8 Paperback

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Who Brought Back the Light

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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>page xi</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xv
Introduction: Arthur Penn's Enduring Gangsters LESTER D. FRIEDMAN	1
Making Waves: The Directing of <i>Bonnie and Clyde</i> ARTHUR PENN	11
What's It Really All About?: Pictures at an Execution DAVID NEWMAN	32
"It's Never the Way I Knew Them": Searching for <i>Bonnie and Clyde</i> DIANE CARSON	42
From "Fucking Cops!" to "Fucking Media!": <i>Bonnie and Clyde</i> for a Sixties America STEVEN ALAN CARR	70
Model Criminals: Visual Style in <i>Bonnie and Clyde</i> MATTHEW BERNSTEIN	101
	ix

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Edited by Lester D. Friedman
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

x CONTENTS

The Hemorrhaging of American Cinema: <i>Bonnie and Clyde's</i> Legacy of Cinematic Violence	127
STEPHEN PRINCE	
Erasure and Taboo: A Queer Reading of <i>Bonnie and Clyde</i>	148
LIORA MORIEL	
Reviews of <i>Bonnie and Clyde</i>	177
BOSLEY CROWTHER	
PAULINE KAEL	
<i>Filmography</i>	199
<i>Select Bibliography</i>	203
<i>Index</i>	205

Contributors

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[More information](#)

xii CONTRIBUTORS

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David Newman (scriptwriter) started his professional career at *Esquire* magazine (where he co-created the "Dubious Achievement Awards") and went on to a distinguished career as a writer for theater productions and films. He has been nominated for the Academy Award and won the New York Film Critics Award, the National Society of Film Critics Award, and three Writers Guild of America awards for various screenplays (several coauthored with Robert Benton, several with Leslie Newman, and several that he wrote solo). In addition to the one he wrote for *Bonnie and Clyde*, his scripts include *What's Up Doc?*, *Bad Company*, and *Superman, the Movie*.

Arthur Penn (director) began his career in live television and eventually directed shows for *The Colgate Comedy Hour*, *The Philco-Goodyear Playhouse*, and *Playhouse 90*. Penn has directed both Broadway shows and Hollywood films, and his

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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

xiii

illustrious career has spanned four decades (see Filmography). He also created the Actors' Studio Free Theater in New York City, an organization devoted to presenting plays out of the commercial mainstream, and currently serves as its director.

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Acknowledgments

The oft-quoted cliché reminds us that “success has many parents, but failure is an orphan.” So it is with this anthology. Over the time that it has taken me to assemble this volume, I have been blessed with the good fortune to work with a roster of generous and talented contributors from various academic institutions. Several have collaborated with me previously, and I take their willingness to do so again as a high compliment; others are sharing their thoughts and energy with me for the first time on this project. All have functioned far beyond the expected professional parameters, and their enthusiastic exchange of ideas with each other has turned this book into a truly collaborative experience. To all of you, I express my thanks for your professional patience, your personal kindness, and your individual perseverance.

In addition to the work of these colleagues, this book is graced by the articles written by Arthur Penn and David Newman. Both men deserve our gratitude. Many of the writers in this collection called upon either Arthur or David (and sometimes upon both) to answer a specific question, to verify a particular fact, or just to listen to their ideas. While certainly not agreeing with all that they heard, both men generously gave of their time and even

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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xvi ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

allowed contributors to view valuable documents. Their input has certainly made this book more definitive, not to mention far more enjoyable, than it would have been without their assistance.

I would also like to thank Dede Allen for graciously providing me with pictures for inclusion in this volume. The people at Jerry Ohlinger's Movie Store in New York City were also very helpful in providing necessary stills.

In Syracuse, I am supported, as always, by a wonderful array of colleagues and friends. At the SUNY Health Science Center, my department chairperson, Margaret Braungart, did everything possible to provide me with the time and resources necessary for completing this project. My secretary, Sharon Osika-Michaels, made my life immeasurably easier with her ability to get all the things done when I needed them. At Syracuse University, Owen Shapiro continued to function as a sympathetic listener, supportive counselor, and good friend. My research associate at the E. S. Bird Library, Denise Stevens, saved me countless hours by answering all my questions and gathering whatever documents I required.

This is my first book with Cambridge University Press, and it has been a joy to work with the people there. Beatrice Rehl, the fine arts editor, initiated and supported this volume, providing excellent advice and wise counsel. I was honored to be one of the "boys." Anne Sanow took over the project at a formative stage and oversaw its journey with determination and tact. Susan Greenberg edited these essays with a keen eye and insightful alterations. Andy Horton, general editor of the Cambridge Film Handbooks Series, has been instrumental in getting the project through the various stages in the publishing process. Thanks to all for your hard work, jovial companionship, and professional guidance.

My children, Rachel Elizabeth and Marc Ian Friedman, have heard enough about *Bonnie and Clyde* to last them a lifetime – maybe two lifetimes. Yet I have certainly benefited from their

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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

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xvii

humor and prodding during this book's gestation. My parents, as always, have given me love and affection.

To Rae-Ellen Kavey, I owe a debt far beyond words. Her compassion and kindness, spirit and intelligence, make all things possible.