



Action Speaks Louder: Violence, Spectacle, and the American Action Movie (Wesleyan Film)

By Eric Lichtenfeld

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For more than 30 years, the action movie has been the film genre that most represents Hollywood to the world, as action films find blockbuster success at box offices internationally. Still, the genre seldom receives the critical attention it deserves. Studying its trends, key components, and visual excesses, this new and expanded edition of Action Speaks Louder traces the genre's evolution to reveal how it has come to assume its place of prominence in American culture. With scores of in-depth case studies—including films such as Dirty Harry, RoboCop, Die Hard, Lethal Weapon, Armageddon, Spider-Man, War of the Worlds, and The Incredibles—author Eric Lichtenfeld draws on film analysis, production histories, critical responses, studio marketing materials, and original filmmaker interviews. Up-to-date and comprehensive, Action Speaks Louder is the definitive study of the movies' most kinetic form of fun.

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Editorial Review

Review

“[A]n intelligent, coherent and frequently illuminating study of a genre that has become firmly entrenched in pop culture.”—Geoffrey Berkshire, *Variety*

“[A]n intelligent, coherent and frequently illuminating study of a genre that has become firmly entrenched in pop culture...The book encourages the idea that, although some action films may be ‘mindless,’ our reaction to them doesn't have to be.”—Geoffrey Berkshire, *Variety*

Review

“Eric Lichtenfeld accomplishes the impossible, putting action films under the microscope without robbing them of their ability to startle and amuse us. His marriage of popcorn and the provocative produces what can only be called a roller-coaster read.” (Steven E. de Souza, screenwriter, *Die Hard*)

“I wish I had read this book before I started making my films.” (Richard Donner, director, *Superman: The Movie*, the *Lethal Weapon* films, *16 Blocks*)

About the Author

ERIC LICHTENFELD has worked in many areas of the film industry, and his articles have appeared in film publications including *The Scenographer*, *Film Score Monthly*, and *Trace*, the journal of the Art Directors Guild. He has contributed features and commentaries to special edition DVD releases of such films as *Predator*, *Die Hard*, and *Speed*, and has taught film studies at Loyola Marymount University.

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