



Sometimes you have to wait a long time for a good book. More than twelve years ago, we met two wonderful men, Richard Griffith and Arthur Mayer. Not long before, they had done a fine book for Simon & Schuster called *The Movies*. Now they wanted to do a book about the people of the movies, those special creatures we all knew, and sometimes loved, called the stars.

Many things interfered with the writing of the book. Arthur and Dick agreed not to collaborate, but remained fast friends. In due course the manuscript began to arrive. We agreed to take nearly two years to design and produce the book—and Dick and I spent many happy hours at the Museum of Modern Art, where he was once curator of films, choosing stills. We argued: which photograph was more shocking or surprising? Which more amusing or cruel or campy? Finally, we could get the collection down to no fewer than about 700—and we decided to let the designer, Robert Aulicino, make some of the final choices.

Then, during one of the long months when the book was in design and production, Dick Griffith was killed. He had left the book complete up to a point halfway through his Conclusion. I pieced out the rest, using his words, drawn from his letters.

The result is glorious. *THE MOVIE STARS*, wrote David Elliott in the *Chicago Daily News Panorama Magazine*, "has the stature of a major literary estate . . . immensely erudite, and graced with a vast affection for the movies." Henry S. Resnik in the *Saturday Review* said that "anyone who loves movies will find it irresistible—it's like a shrine for the great mythical heroes of our time."

But the review that might have pleased Dick Griffith most was that of David Denby in the *New York Times Book Review*. He said that "Doubleday's packaging of this material has all the satisfying glamour of a prestige MGM production from the high 1930's."

**L.L. Day**

EDITOR-AT-LARGE

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December 26, 1970

# Saturday Review

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A three-part look at the people who write for and about the movies

Cover design: Bob Cato (photo from the Bettmann Archive)



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Fifty Cents

## Writing and the Film



**BUT WHO WROTE THE MOVIE?**

by Hollis Alpert

**THE CRUEL, CRUEL CRITICS**

by Stephen Koch

**A FLOOD OF FILM BOOK**

by Arthur Knight

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