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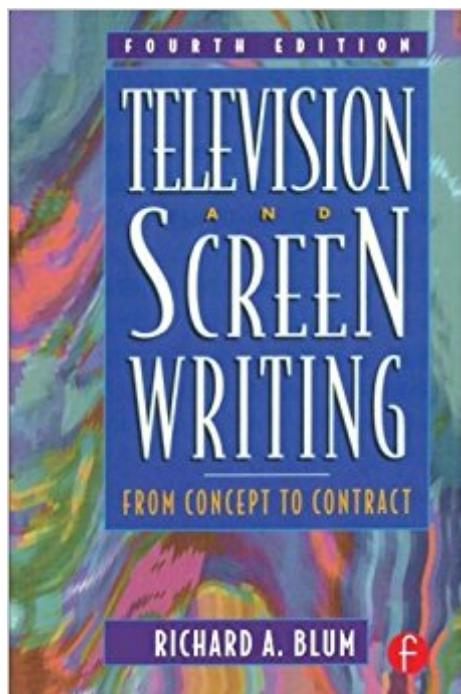
Television And Screen Writing: From Concept To Contract

Synopsis

Now in its fourth edition, Television and Screen Writing: From Concept to Contract is a classic resource for students and professionals in screenwriting and television writing. This book will teach you how to become a creative and marketable writer in every professional arena - including major studios, production companies, networks, cable and pay TV, animation, and interactive programs. Specific techniques and script samples for writing high-quality and producible "spec" scripts for theatrical motion pictures, the sitcom series, one-hour dramatic series, longform television, soaps, talk show, variety, animation, interactive and new media are provided. Television and Screen Writing: From Concept to Contract, Fourth Edition also offers a fully detailed examination of the current marketplace, and distinct strategies for marketing your scripts, from registering and copyrighting the script to signing with an agent. This new edition has been expanded to include the most up-to-date creative and professional script samples, marketing resources, and practical information possible. The companion website offers a wide range of contacts and resources for you to explore, and Internet links to professional resources. There is also an Annotated and Selected Bibliography for your reference

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Customer Reviews

"Very thoughtful and user-friendly; a wonderful conprehensive text." - Nevada McPhearson, Nunez Community College"There was so much information packed on each page I thought I was going to have to highlight the entire book!" - David Wesner, Austin Peay State University

Television and Screenwriting reveals how to write successful scripts for television and motion pictures, and how to effectively market them. To be successful, screenwriters must learn techniques to guide them from the germination of an idea to the revision of the final draft. Episodic television, long-form television, and motion pictures all share certain needs; the development of producible stories, appealing and castable characters, credible dialogue, expert structure, and skillful visualization. This Book Was Selected By: Â Writers Guild of America Website for "Tools of the Trade" as a recommended reading. Â The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting as a recommended reading resource for every writer and student of writing in the country and abroad interested in the five $25,000 fellowships. It was added to the "Bibliography of Books on Screenwriting &Other Resource Information" and is on the Nicholl Screenwriting Fellowships Website as a recommended reading. Â Scriptwriting Links Website and Playwriting Website as a recommended reading.

We used this in one of my college classes this semester. It really felt like a textbook -- great facts but poor entertainment value. If any college professors are reading... If you want to bore the heck out of your students -- use this book. If not, use something like "Gotham Writer's Workshop: Writing Movies". If you're an individual looking for a guideline that will also entertain you, check out "Your Screenplay Sucks" instead. There are simply better books out there.

This book is pretty good for basic know-how for writing films. Kinda boring, but you will find everything you need to know.

great condition bought as a used book .... looks new

good book

If it is possible to learn how to write a screenplay from a book, this is that book. Not only is it a good guide to teach writing, but it is also an essential reference. I have it on the lower shelf next to my computer so I can reach it at a moments notice. I am constantly looking things up in it, from formatting to contract minimums to Internet addresses.The book is well organized, well indexed, and easy to read. Even if you know how to write, this book is essential as a ready reference on almost any topic.From start to finish, Blum guides you through the process of writing Movie and TV scripts. A++

Richard Blum's Television and Screen Writing (4th Edition) is a welcome revision of one of the classic books for writers by a professional from within the industry who also happens to be a topnotch screenwriting teacher. It provides a wealth of information that all aspiring TV and screenwriters need. Dr. Blum leads you through the writing process with numerous examples. However, Dr. Blum goes much deeper by discussing character, dialogue, and how to create stories with scenes that work for the story and not against it. The Fourth Edition also has insights into animation and new media, daytime serials and talk shows, and, most important of all, how to market what you write. Read it thoroughly and then go back and read it again. This book is an invaluable resource.

It is a rare day when a textbook makes my blood boil. Today is that day, and "Television and Screen Writing" is the book. I should say, at the outset, that I intend to go into great detail, because this book illustrates principles which go far beyond the topic it addresses. However, in the interest of easing the burden on more casual readers, I have summarized my less philosophical, more literary criticisms first. Also note that, because I hope to support my criticisms with extensive examples from the text, I will refer to these by number within the body of this article; following the main article, I will append the full citations.I would not be so upset by this book were it not for two facts. First, the author is a professional writer who, in addition to holding a doctorate, teaches film and screen writing at the University of Central Florida. Had this been a book written by a mathematician or a sociologist or a painter, I would have held it to a different standard. But this is a book written by a professor who teaches writing: *Doctor* Richard A. Blum. I think that it is entirely reasonable to expect such an author's book to be extremely well-written. As I will detail below, nothing could be further from the truth and, in point of fact, this is the most poorly written textbook I've ever read.The second point which upsets me is that this is the fourth edition of "Television and Screen Writing." Again, it is reasonable to expect that most -- or at least some -- of the major flaws in the text would have been addressed by the time a fourth edition went to press. However, Focal Press is, evidently, willing to charge the reader $40 for a copy of this book, but unwilling to hire an editor to make sure that its contents meet even minimal standards.In all fairness, I am duty-bound to point out this book's few strengths. As an introductory text on writing for the screen it does contain a great deal of accurate and useful technical information, although it often has to be teased out of unclear language and examples. In addition, several chapters, aside from being informative and useful, are nearly free from the defects which I will enumerate below (all of which only raises further questions). These

chapters include: Chapter 4: How to Write the Story; Chapter 7: How to Write Realistic Dialogue; Chapter 10: Script Revision; and Chapter 20: National and State Funding. The other 16 chapters all suffer from the following problems, to one degree or another:a) Unclear or incorrect language. This is a constant plague throughout, and the text includes many examples of grammatically incorrect usage. A published professor of writing should never make such mistakes. (See citations [1] and [2], below.)b) Misuse of words. "I do not think it means what you think it means." Shocking. Shameful. (See citation [3].)c) Repetitiveness. Whole sentences and even paragraphs are repeated verbatim, or nearly so, sometimes within only a few lines of one another. This is laziness and smacks of insolence. (See citations [4] and [5].)d) Unclear, poorly chosen examples. The text is rife with these. (See citation [6].) I feel that it's reasonable to expect a professional writer to provide original script samples written especially for the text. This would have saved an awful lot of grief, but would have required much more effort on the part of the author. This is also related to the next point.e) Technology-specific content. The author makes the mistake of giving formatting tips that are proprietary to a specific computer program, often failing to even identify what program he's referring to. This also crops up repeatedly in the script samples. Because the author has chosen to reprint script samples (actually just templates), verbatim, from a specific piece of software, they frequently contain program-specific instruction embedded within them. This tends to be very confusing. (See citations [7], [8], and [9].)f) Filler. If the author gives three examples, he gives thirty. Again, this occurs over and over. (See citation [10].)g) Ethos and ethics. It should come as little surprise that an author this unscrupulous exhibits questionable morals. While I am certain that he himself is unaware of exactly how crass he is, he obviously places great faith in the winner-take-all ethos of modern American society. (See citation [11].) As someone who is writing what purports to be a beginner's guide to an art form, why Blum focuses so much time and ink on the vast riches to be had is beyond me. He even includes an appendix the sole purpose of which is, in short, to inform the reader that (to paraphrase): "You, too, can earn millions!" (See citation [12].) This is a disservice to all artists.Apart from the most obvious conclusion (that this is not a very good text), the very existence of this book speaks volumes about the state of the arts, education, and our society at large. It stands as a shining example of the ubiquitous charlatanism that reduces our entire culture to the mediocrity of the lowest common denominator. I can understand and accept how a writer of such ineptitude could find success in Hollywood. One look at Hollywood's typical product makes it clear that quality is of scant little consequence. But the fact that Dr. Blum has the gall to "teach" others this art and that an institution of higher learning has deemed him qualified to do so is a downright depressing reality.Even ignoring its strictly literary faults, this book, which purports to teach a type of

creative writing, does nothing more than (attempt to) instruct the reader in the art of cookie cutting. That cookies should be cut -- indeed, that cookies should be made at all -- is never called into question. Thus, aesthetics are thrown wholly under the bus.The fact that the author has found success both in the worlds of entertainment and education does not bode well for either. To encounter such low personal standards and such utter disregard for one's one dignity and reputation is shocking, appalling, and, more to the point, demoralizing to any writer whose waistline is shrinking.The great irony of this book is that by ostensibly adding to our society's culture, and by instructing its readers in an art form typical of our culture, it only manages to illustrate the degeneracy of that culture and reveal its advanced state of moribundity. I weep for the arts.Citations:----------[1] "Aristotle talked about the importance of the proper arrangement of incidents in a plot to have the greatest impact on the audience." (p. 51)[2] "The same wisdom about not writing a spec script for the sitcom you want to work for holds true about writing spec scripts for a different current drama series than the one you write want to for." (p. 219)[3] "It is the penultimate tool for screenwriters, television writers..." (p. 116)[4] "The 'Star Trek: Voyager' script is reprinted with permission of Richard D. Lindheim, Paramount TV Group." (p. 239) The, after one very short intervening paragraph, we have: "The teaser and Act One follow and are reprinted with permission of Richard D. Lindheim, Paramount TV Group." (p. 240)[5] "These TV script format samples are reprinted with permission of the software program Final Draft, Inc." (p. 258) Then, exactly four sentences later: "The 'Days of our Lives' script format sample follows and is reprinted with permission of the software program Final Draft, Inc." (p. 258)[6] "The see how Act One from that 'Frasier' script episode is written, see the following Act One Scene A excerpt... All dialogue should appear double spaced." (p. 175) The script expert appears, starting on the following page, but *without* double spacing. What's the point of describing how it should appear, but then not printing it that way? This trend, common throughout the text, is extremely confusing, at best.[7] "After selecting transition to put in FADE OUT, hit Ctrl+9 to select end/start of act. Then type END OF ACT I and simply hit Enter..." (p. 166)[8] "If you see any script notes, they contain useful information. Double-click the ScriptNote symbol to view it." (p. 228)[9] "'Days of our Lives' scripts have three transitions here with triple spaces between them. Type in the text, then go up to TEXT to SPACE BEFORE." (p. 258)[10] "...wonderful ongoing internal conflicts for characters featured in shows such as 'Malcolm in the Middle,' 'Friends,' 'Everybody Loves Raymond,' '3rd Rock from the Sun,' 'The Drew Carey Show,' 'Ally McBeal,' 'The Practice,' 'ER,' 'Chicago Hope,' 'Law & Order,' 'Law & Order: SVU,' 'NYPD Blue,' 'Frasier,' 'Coach,', 'Veronica's Closet,' '90210,' and 'Melrose Place.' It was a classic sitcom setup for 'Seinfeld,' 'Cheers,' 'Taxi,' 'Murphy Brown,' and 'M*A*S*H.'" (p. 272)[11] "In

1999, two of my students... sold their first spec screenplay... for $200,000." (p. 2)[12] All of Appendix A. (pp. 355-400.) This is the only Appendix printed in the book; the rest are available only online. Again, this is telling.

This book starts at the beginning and points out the path from the beginning thought concept of a TV Show to the end product. It guides you past the pitfalls of the unique style of writing for Television.A hand holding guide to overcome the maze and pitfalls of required formats and style that is required to submit a professional work that will help your get reviewed.Well thought out and a good read.

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