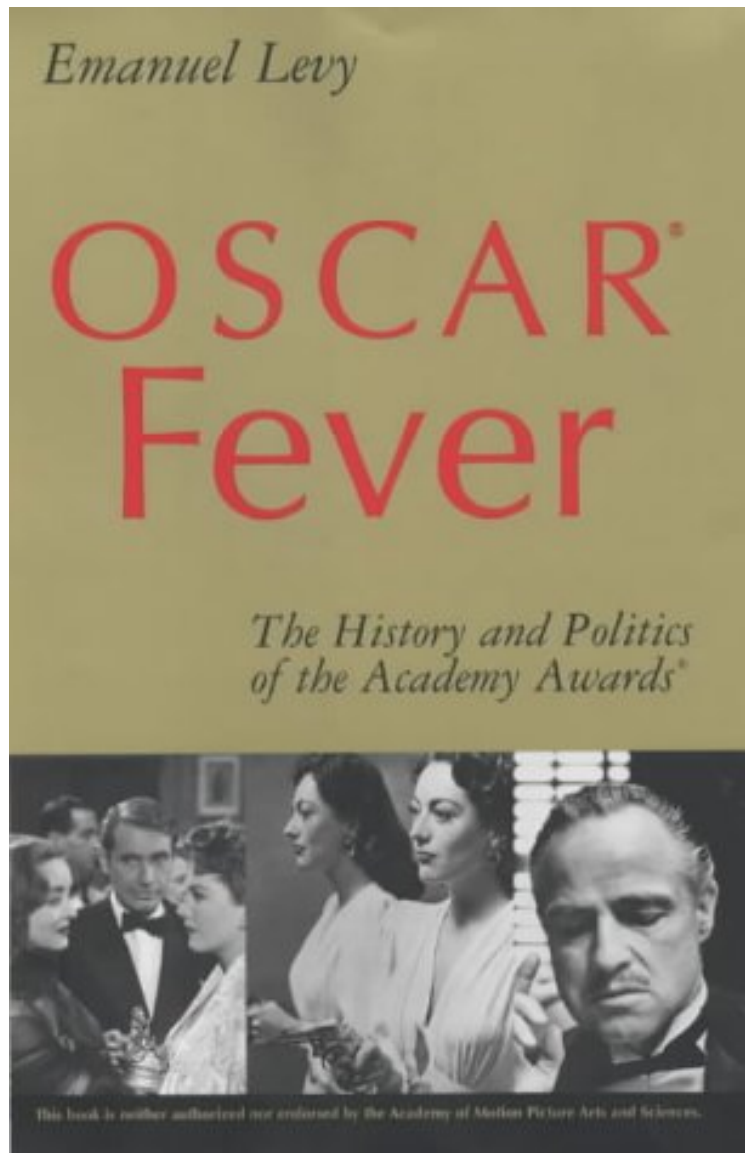


[Download free ebook] Oscar Fever: The History and Politics of the Academy Awards

Oscar Fever: The History and Politics of the Academy Awards

Emanuel Levy

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Emanuel Levy : Oscar Fever: The History and Politics of the Academy Awards before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Oscar Fever: The History and Politics of the Academy Awards:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Too Many Errors to Ignore!By PajAlthough Levy's critiques of movies themselves are insightful and his take on the politics that go into the Oscar race enlightening, this book contains far too many major factual errors and inconsistencies to be ignored. It is statistically heavy, with a thorough

list of the winners in the five major categories from 1927 to 2000. It contains many charts and breakouts of how many movies of each genre won Best Picture, the cultural importance of the movies nominated, the relative ages of male and female to when they first won, etc. But it also states that Peter Fonda's sister is Lynn Redgrave, Mel Gibson made a movie about "Walter" Wallace, and doesn't include Dame Maggie Smith in the list of royally noted people who've been nominated. For inconsistencies, Levy notes on page 46 that the youngest Best Actress nominee is Kate Winslet for "Titanic," at age 22. Further down the page, he states, "The youngest nominee among the Best Actresses is French Isabelle Adjani, for the title role in "The Story of Adele H." at the age of twenty-one." What? Then, Levy asserts that "Cimarron" was the only western ever to win Best Picture, but later correctly states that both "Dances With Wolves" and "Unforgiven," both westerns, also won Best Picture. This kind of mistake over and over again indicates that book was very poorly edited, or edited by an intern, or rushed out. Such an exhaustively detailed book should be more accurate. If you can ignore the factual errors, this is an interesting book for those who love everything Hollywood. It is almost obsessively focused on its subject, and gives substantive, thoughtful attention to subjects like the lack of winners among blacks and the disturbing tendency for many of the roles of female nominees to be for emotionally or physically tormented people (Jessica Lange in "Frances," for example). I found the errors negatively impacted the whole book, so I'm giving it only three stars. Read it, but be prepared to muddle through a lot of misinformation.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A lively and comprehensive history of the Oscars
By A Customer
Emanuel Levy's OSCAR FEVER is a treasure trove of Academy Award history and lore. It is a sociological study in the best sense in that it tells us quite a bit about our culture's functions and dysfunctions over nearly 75 years--how the Academy has awarded, or not, actresses, minorities, message pictures, or trendy-blockbuster films. Yet, the book entertains at the same time. Unlike most sociologists, Levy writes with assurance and panache. What is it exactly that makes the Academy Awards so special? In an age when most everything seems stage-managed, overblown, and overdone, perhaps it is the sheer spontaneity and unpredictability of the Oscars that most grab us. Who can forget Jack Palance's one-armed push-ups? The audacity of Marlon Brando? OSCAR FEVER tells many behind-the-scenes stories of life imitating art, which is perhaps what most interests us: the egos and politics behind Oscar. For example, ALL ABOUT EVE, the most-nominated film of all time (along with TITANIC), caused a real-life cat fight between Bette Davis and Anne Baxter over the Best Actress/Supporting Actress categories. ("The title isn't 'All about Margo Channing' Anne Baxter maintained.) Neither won that year--nor did Gloria Swanson (SUNSET BOULEVARD). The Oscar went to Judy Holliday for BORN YESTERDAY! One look at the amazingly crowded and comprehensive index shows OSCAR FEVER is both a reference source and history--in its way, Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the Oscars but Were Afraid to Ask. This book takes popular culture seriously and, in doing so, is insightful, refreshing, and original--in short, a treat.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good Read for Oscar Fans
By A Customer
I just finished reading the paperback edition of Emanuel Levy's Oscar Fever: The History and Politics of the Academy Awards. There are a few errors in the book which is unfortunate, but on balance it's a great read, and really informative. I learned much more than I expected from Levy's analysis of the Oscar as the most coveted, glamorous, and controversial fixture of American show business, not just movies. The book chronicles the full range of prejudices, nostalgia, and politics exhibited by the Academy voters over the past seven decades, and takes a pretty detailed look at why movies win. The statistics that Levy provides about the age of the winners, the difference between male and female artists, the underrepresentation of black and other ethnic minorities, the discrimination against women directors, and the type of movies and screen roles that win Oscars, are fascinating. Levy finds some pretty consistent trends and documents them. I have no doubts that Oscar Fever (a good title) will be kept in print forever, as it provides the most comprehensive and knowledgeable discussion of the Oscars as a unique Hollywood and now global phenomenon. In short, I recommend the book to anyone interested in understanding what's contagious about American pop culture. On a scale of 1 to 5, I rank it 4.

Oscar Fever is both history and appreciation, filled with insider stories and little-known facts, such as who came up with the idea of the Academy Awards; who the youngest and oldest winners are; which film garnered the most nominations; who has been nominated the most times without ever winning and more. Included are all the latest anecdotes and statistics, as well as a selection of film stills from the greatest winners, nostalgic and new, to tell the inside story of Oscar. The Academy Awards ceremony is the single most anticipated and widely viewed spectacle in the world. It has close to one billion viewers every year. How has this event grown, in some seventy-five years, from an intimate gathering of directors and actors to a global phenomenon that dominates magazines, newspapers, radio, TV and the internet. Oscar Fever is a completely new and far more popular rewriting of And the Winner Is... (1987; 1990). It is both history and appreciation, chockablock with inside stories and little-known facts. Included are all the latest facts and statistics, as well as film stills, nostalgic and new, to tell the inside story of Oscar and what the awards really say about our times.

From Publishers Weekly
This jaunty and comprehensive look at Oscar history and lore encompasses the larger social and cultural implications of a narrow subject. Levy, a senior film reviewer for Variety, draws on an extraordinarily

detailed knowledge of Hollywood history, providing intriguing factoids to supplement his assertions and analysis about subjects like gender, age and race in Hollywood, and probing such essential questions as whether the Oscars are a "popularity contest." Levy supplies all the technical details of the nomination process, the rank of the Oscars among other film industry awards and a wide array of statistics (e.g., 20% of all actresses and 5% of actors are under 25 years of age when they receive nominations for best performance). Meanwhile, his analysis of why films about race, such as *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and *In the Heart of the Night*, receive Oscar nominations is thoughtful and savvy. No sociological question escapes Levy's notice, and he's got an answer for everything. Do roles that emphasize suffering and victimization help women win Oscars? (Yes.) Does the use of accents help performers win? (Not singlehandedly, but they help.) Can even a single Oscar overhype a career? (Very often, yes.) While on the surface these questions seem facile, he integrates them into the larger industry and social portrait, demonstrating their wider ramifications.

(Mar. 23)Forecast: Film scholars may find this book unnecessary, but Oscar fans will enjoy it. Originally scheduled for January publication, the book is now slated for publication only two days before the telecast of the 73rd Academy Awards. Any earlier delivery to bookstores will only enhance this title's chances for success. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* This latest in the never-ending stream of books about the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' annual awards comprises 15 chapters and appendixes that describe and explore, among other topics, the voting timetable, the importance of being nominated, Best Picture by genre, the age and gender of actors, the Oscars international reputation, and the sociocultural influences affecting outcomes. Film critic Levy (*Cinema of Outsiders*, LJ 10/15/99) provides some revelations, including the fierce competition to be an Oscar presenter. "Political correctness is exercised, with producers trying to satisfy age, race, and sex quotas. Presenters...must be stars who can help generate good ratings...newsworthy types who have won Oscars in the past and may win again that night...celebs who are sure to make some kind of fashion statement." As a distillation and analysis, *Oscar Fever* has merit, although film students and longtime fans will (or should) have most of this information already in their heads. *Inside Oscar, 10th Anniversary Edition* (Ballantine, 1996) remains the first choice for entertainment, information, and photos taken at the big event. Recommended for larger public libraries and film collections. Kim Holston, American Inst. for Chartered Property Casualty Underwriters, Malvern, PA Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. "[Levy] appears to know everything worth knowing about the Oscars[he] has so much lore to draw upon, and so many amusing stories to tell." *The Washington Post Book World* "Packs more information about these eagerly awaited envelopes (and the nominations that precede them) than any previous book." *National Board of Motion Pictures* "A brilliant social history Levy casts a klieg light on previously unseen social biases that get rewarded by that secular ritual known as Oscar," *Philadelphia Inquirer* "Movie junkies will lap up this well-researched, dishy read that uses historical analysis of past Oscar nominees and winners to show what we have long suspected: Hollywood is brutally unfair in deciding who gets a statuette and who doesn't." *Albuquerque Journal* "Oscar fans will treasure *Oscar Fever* for its trove of statistical jewels; the other 5 billion of us will find vindication in Levy's erudite assessment of the longest and most self-indulgent movie ad in the world." - *The Baltimore Sun*, July 22, 2001 "Levy's statistical approach suggests interesting cultural conclusions this is a book of facts, amusing judgments, superficialities, and gossip? a good book for general readers." *Choice*, February 2002 "Contains much statistical information that is of interest, as well as insightful commentary and telling anecdotean absorbing source of Hollywood folklore." *Sunday Times* (London), January 13 2002 "The definitive book on the subject For fans who want answers to just about every question ever asked about the Oscars, Levy's book supplies reams and reams and reams." *The Star Democrat* (Easton, MD), March 29, 2002 "[A] fascinating study." *Herald Sun* (Scotland), March 23, 2002