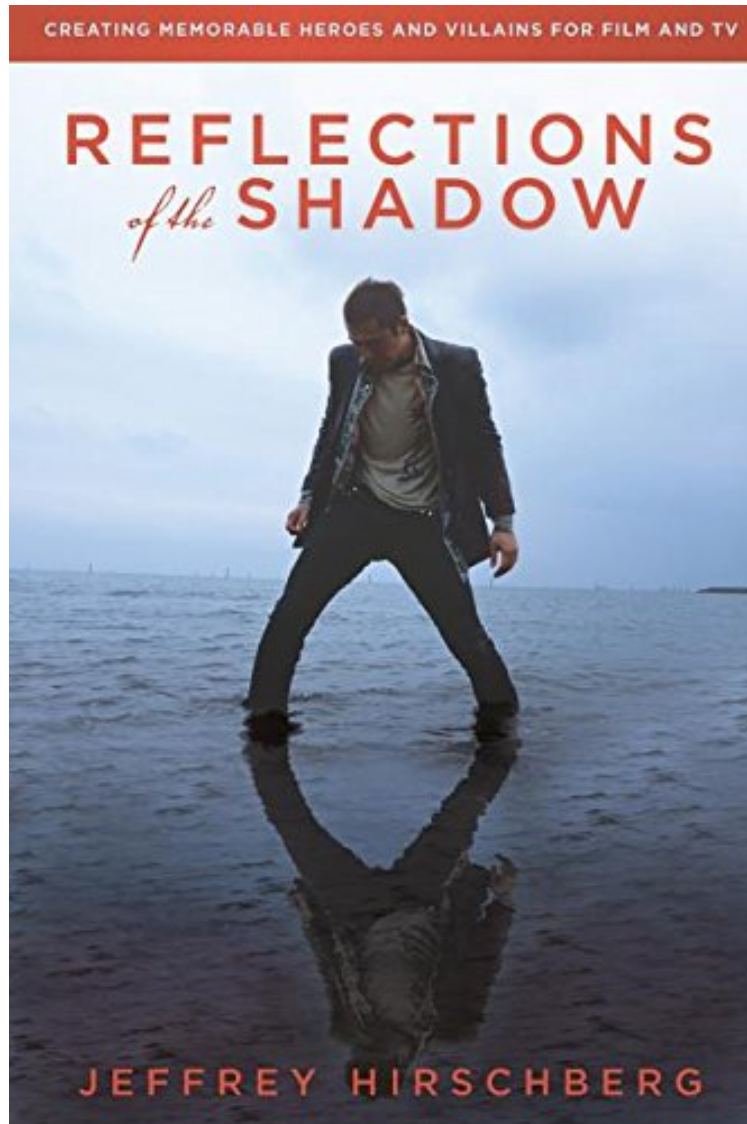


Reflections of the Shadow: Creating Memorable Heroes and Villains For Film and TV

Jeffrey Hirschberg

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Jeffrey Hirschberg : Reflections of the Shadow: Creating Memorable Heroes and Villains For Film and TV
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reflections of the
Shadow: Creating Memorable Heroes and Villains For Film and TV:

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. 50% GOOD, 50% MISGUIDED By K. Kallenbach The sections in

PART ONE of REFLECTIONS OF THE SHADOW are insightful and worth the price of admission--for example, THE INCOMPLETE HERO, THE VILLAIN OUTSIDER, TEN MEMORABLE HEROES and TEN MEMORABLE VILLAINS. But on page 158 and throughout PART TWO, Hirschberg makes a fatal error by using a misguided interpretation and definition of protagonist, as "the first character to act... the one who makes the first move, the one who gets the ball rolling" in the story. So, by his own logic and analysis, the SHARK in JAWS is the protagonist, HANS GRUBER in DIE HARD is the protagonist, and DARTH VADER in STAR WARS is the protagonist. Why would he do this? Maybe to be different... to be controversial... I'm not sure. Maybe he was convinced by Steven de Souza. Whatever the reason, it's a HUGE MISTAKE and THE POWERS THAT BE at Michael Wiese Productions should have intervened. As a PhD in Classical Greek Studies and Linguistics, I was appalled by this definition and shocked that it went to print. You might say, "it grabbed me by the throat and never let go." Besides the fact that it will offend screenwriters, playwrights and teachers of these crafts across the globe, it's fundamentally incorrect. In his interpretation, Hirschberg commits the most common of linguistic errors: the literal. For him, "first" references only the timing of an event or action. Classical translations are not so limited, however, and include: primary, principle, foremost, chief or highest. The primary character, our HERO, usually does not make the first move during the OPENING HOOK... but he will make the FIRST NECESSARY/OBLIGATORY MOVE in response to the INCITING INCIDENT. In Hirschberg's defense, English probably is his "first" language.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Good but with some flaws
By W. Thielemans
Jeffrey Hirschberg's book on creating heroes and villains for the movies is extremely well written: easy to read yet all the salient points are retained immediately. There are definitions and discussions on what makes a good hero and a good villain, and then ten characters on each side of the moral spectrum are looked at in greater detail. In the second part of the book we get a few fairly short but really very, very good interviews with screenwriters who created some of the characters looked at earlier, and then the book continues with more practical writing advice on how to apply the principles discussed earlier to your script. The book will be most valuable to new and aspiring screenwriters, but it contains material of interest for all levels of experience. So why no five stars? Well, the analysis of Indiana Jones (the character) isn't really correct, and in the second half, Hirschberg takes on board a new but incorrect definition of the term 'protagonist' posited by Stephen De Souza. And by redefining such a crucial term in this way, there's a real risk of unnecessary confusion creeping in. Especially since this redefinition only takes into account one of the aspects of 'protagonism', to coin a phrase, while the other aspects are even more important to defining who the protagonist of the story is.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book is a gem!
By Customer
This book is a gem. While having sensed when well crafted heroes and villains contributed to my pleasure from watching a movie I never really appreciated why some screenplays seemed to accomplish this with ease and others fell short. I'm not a screenwriter or associated with movie production, I am however a movie goer. Now having read Reflections Of The Shadow I can appreciate more fully the 'why' behind my enjoyment of well crafted roles, and the effort, discipline, and tasks of the screenwriters when developing them: which of course adds to my enjoyment. I heartily recommend this book to any and all of the movie going public.

This powerful book will show you how to write a great screenplay, teleplay, or novel by helping you create one-of-a-kind heroes and villains that audiences will never forget. Includes analysis of such films as The Dark Knight, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Casablanca, and The Silence of the Lambs as well as interviews with the screenwriters of Die Hard, Gladiator, Spider-Man, and Fatal Attraction. Foreword by Steven de Souza (Die Hard, 48 Hrs., and Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Cradle of Life)

About the Author
Jeffrey Hirschberg is an Associate Professor, Director, and founder of the Television and Film Arts program at SUNY Buffalo State. As a writer and director, he has written for Showtime and ABC and his films have screened at major film festivals. Jeffrey directed the WGA's TV Pilots Resurrected program at Lincoln Center and his feature script -- "Why Can't They All Be Like Johnny Depp?" -- was a winner of the WGA's Screenplay Reading Series. He is a graduate of Cornell University and holds a Master's from Syracuse University's Newhouse School. Jeffrey lives with his wife, three boys, and dogs Al (after Alfred Hitchcock) and Stan (after Stan Lee) in Upstate New York.