



The Friedkin Connection: A Memoir

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The long-awaited memoir from the Academy Award-winning director of such legendary films as *The French Connection*, *The Exorcist*, and *To Live and Die in LA*, *The Friedkin Connection* takes readers from the streets of Chicago to the suites of Hollywood and from the sixties to today, with autobiographical storytelling as fast-paced and intense as any of the auteur's films.

William Friedkin, maverick of American cinema, offers a candid look at Hollywood, when traditional storytelling gave way to the rebellious and alternative; when filmmakers like him captured the paranoia and fear of a nation undergoing a cultural nervous breakdown.

The Friedkin Connection includes 16 pages of black-and-white photographs.

The Friedkin Connection: A Memoir Details

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Author : William Friedkin

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Memoir

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From Reader Review The Friedkin Connection: A Memoir for online ebook

Cara Blakeslee says

A great insight into his films. I haven't seen a lot of them so that's why I could only give it a 3-star review. I thoroughly enjoyed the section on the Exorcist, since it's my favorite movie. He has a very interesting take on directing.

Patrick Boberg says

Maybe the best audiobook memoir currently available. Friedkin reads his own story with such zeal at times it has your adrenaline running, next you're fighting alongside him during some insane power struggle, followed by several chapters of vicarious dread over personal mistakes and artistic sabotage. You really feel you're getting the whole story and then some.

Nearly mandatory listening for anyone who dreams of becoming a Filmmaker.

Daniel Guzman says

"To become a director you must have ambition, luck, and grace. Talent counts, but without luck and ambition, opportunities won't occur"

Miguel Ravelo says

Friedkin es generosísimo compartiendo su conocimiento sobre sus películas, el mundo del cine y sobre todo, de la vida. Eso es una de las cosas que más me gustaron de The Friedkin Connection. Por supuesto uno se va a enterar a fondo de cómo fue la producción de The French Connection, The Exorcist o Sorcerer, pero esto va más en la línea de qué fueron, qué significaron las películas en el todo que es la vida de Friedkin. A través de su trabajo, Friedkin nos cuenta su vida, sus ilusiones y especialmente sus fracasos, los que después del Exorcista, parecieron llegar a chorros, al menos en lo económico. Uno tras otro. Y es ahí cuando el que creo yo que es el verdadero punto de este libro va formándose. La historia de un hombre que alcanzó rápidamente y sin esperarlo la cima del éxito y a cómo lo llevo a actuar esto. En qué persona lo convirtió. Y luego, cómo tuvo que afrontar los resultados de lo hecho en ese periodo. Una visión sobre la vida, sobre qué es valioso, sobre qué es lo que queda al final. Ya no es el éxito, los Oscars, es el entender qué fue lo que salió mal, aceptar cuando uno tuvo la culpa, reconocer cuando por más que el dinero o los productores digan lo contrario, si uno está feliz con el resultado final, nada más importa. Pero especialmente, disfrutar el camino por más espantoso que se ponga, o por más que las cosas parece que van a tardar en llegar. Y vaya que para Friedkin la cosa se pone difícil.

Y que una persona como él sea capaz de escribir, luego de una enfermedad espantosa: "I considered the possibility that I might die without having accomplished anything of lasting value", lo deja a un pensando

muchas cosas.

Amé el libro y terminé encariñadísimo con don Friedkin. Quiero volver a ver todas sus películas. Lo leí en Kindle y terminó subrayadísimo, y por supuesto lo voy a comprar en físico. Esto hay que tenerlo siempre a la mano.

Dan Lalande says

William Friedkin recounts, in acute detail, the professional stages of his improbable life: Chicago-based documentarian, A-list Hollywood director, middling indie-film talent, and, redemptively, international overseer of operas. It's straight ahead, has long, exciting episodes (especially the inside scoops on his one-two punch, *The French Connection* and *The Exorcist*) but on the whole, is bigger than its britches - a lot like a William Friedkin film.

Dean Anderson says

As of this posting the Goodreads information about the number of pages in this book is incorrect by a couple of hundred pages. The real count is 512 pages.

Do Two Great Films Make a Life?

One hand, holding a pair of glasses, covers the bottom half of his face. William Friedkin lets us with the picture that he won't reveal his whole self in this memoir. That's okay. He can keep all the gossip on his failed marriages and his other non-cinematic to himself. The important thing is that he shares great stories about his film making career.

The cover also blurbs, "Legendary Director of *The French Connection* and *The Exorcist*". Really, those are the two films that people will always associate with the director, his hugely commercial and critically acclaimed hits. And there are great stories about those. Friedkin admits he wasn't thrilled with the selection of Gene Hackman as Popeye Doyle for "*The French Connection*" and that even through production he wasn't sure if the performance that eventually won an Oscar would be adequate. He cops to breaking laws and endangering lives to film the famous car/train chase in the day before CGI. He recounts his battles and feuds with "*Exorcist*" William Blatty over the horror film's content and with voice actress Mercedes McCambridge over the film's credits. (There are also wonderful anecdotes about what the actress went through to achieve her demonic tone; after years in AA, and with council from clergy, she glugged on cigarettes, Jack Daniels and raw eggs.)

But Friedkin's less successful films provide good stories as well; his encounters with basketball legends in the making of "*Blue Chips*", the production shut down over Al Pacino's too short haircut for "*Cruising*", Friedkin's passing of counterfeit bills that were props for "*To Live and Die in L.A.*", and many other fun tales from even lesser films. I also enjoyed his stories about his second career directing opera.

Friedkin admits to his arrogance, temper and other personal failings. He gives some details about his struggles with health and even faith. He never gives his whole self, but refreshingly doesn't claim to. Discussing near death experiences, he wonders whether he his life had meaning. In my mind, he isn't one of the great directors. Film makers such as Akira Kurosawa, Alfred Hitchcock, Stanley Kubrick and contemporaries like Woody Allen, Steven Spielberg and the Coen Brothers have made a number of masterpieces over decades of work. Friedkin has two masterpieces made over a couple of years in the early

seventies. But that ain't too shabby. (Though he is also responsible for the awful travesty entitled "Deal of the Century" with Chevy Chase and Gregory Hines, one of the films I most regretted paying to see. He does not discuss the making of this film.)

Patrick Krause says

Friedkin takes readers back into his past to watch his rise to one of the great directors of all time, then his unlikely fall from Hollywood grace and finding peace with his place in the world. Obviously Friedkin has had many successes in his movie career, but i found the most interesting parts of the memoir to be where he looks inwards at his failures and what lead him to those places.

Brian Joynt says

This is an interesting and introspective memoir written with conviction from one of the most underrated of the New Hollywood filmmakers. William Friedkin--in a candid yet thoughtful tone--examines his early endeavors as a camera operator with WGN in Chicago to his wide successes and failures in Hollywood. While a lot of these types of memoirs only serve as a podium for an actor or director to argue their side of a controversy associated with his or her personal life, Friedkin takes the high road and truly delivers something special for the film fan--carefully detailed memories and anecdotes of his many inspiring and masterful films. He skips over a couple of flops--namely Deal of the Century and The Guardian--but otherwise regales the reader with a treasure trove of insightful information. He writes very little about his personal life, but that's not the kind of stuff I want to hear about. The recent Alec Baldwin memoir was nothing but filler surrounding the shocking incidents he's come to be known for; there were no stories about Glengarry Glen Ross, or Beetlejuice, or any of the films he's done that would make someone want to read a book about his career. This tome does not suffer that pitfall, and serves as both a fascinating memoir and a manual for the craft. Highly recommended.

Axel Matfin says

Stunning. One of the best books about art that I've ever read. Friedkin's obsessive pursuit of purity in his art made him and broke him, only for him to rise from the ashes. Would absolutely recommend to anyone interested in film. Come for his account of The French Connection and The Exorcist, stay for the trials of Sorcerer and the genius of To Live and Die in LA.

Ben says

Reading Friedkin put his career into words, with his usual flair, attitude and honesty, is a refreshingly fun and energetic experience. He skips over failed relationships, soured friendships and destroyed colleagues, unlike Easy Riders & Raging Bulls, which baths in that. Instead he wants to talk about his process for each of his films, how they were made, the troubles they went through and his own mental state through each one.

As you'd expect, he spends a good chunk of the book in the 70s - at least half the book is spent discussing The French Connection, The Exorcist and Sorcerer. The French Connection is perhaps the most interesting segment, as he discusses how much he hated Hackman in that role, the bribing of officials to get things filmed, the problems with casting and how he got depression after winning his Oscar. He leaves nothing on the table in that chapter.

I am bias, I love William Friedkin - he is one of my most respected directors. I wish more directors would summarise their career in this fashion, it was a lot of fun.

Andrew says

Excellent writer. And Honest.

Exorcist is the scariest movie I ever saw. The French Connection one of the best crime movies ever. Live and die in LA one of the most under rated. Friedman directed all of them. His autobiography, very well, and not ghost , written tells how he made these films. Fascinating stuff and highly recommended.

Kit Fox says

Hyperbolic and self-congratulatory? Sure. Immensely readable with great insights into the making of some of the best films of the 1970s? All the way. Not sure why, but I'm kinda inclined to believe Friedkin was telling the whole truth whenever he owned up to some illegal activity. Doing 90 through crowded city streets without permits? Strong-arming an adult bookshop that was screening illegal dupes of his films? Using real heroin for the sake of veracity? I believe all of that and more. Also loved the idea of him being invited to meet a tribe of Kurdish devil-worshippers while filming in Iraq for >The Exorcist. Amazing stuff all around, especially his understandably philosophical musings on the ethos of what makes for a good cinematic chase sequence. Not for nothing, Friedkin quotes—and boasts a career that epitomizes—legendary producer Dan Brown's aphorism, "Those whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make successful in show business."

Serdar says

Jazzy first-person tour of the career of the guy what brung youse "The Exorcist", "The French Connection", "Sorcerer" (IMO better than the original "Wages Of Fear"), "To Live And Die In L.A." (hello, WRONG-WAY CHASE UP A CALIFORNIA FREEWAY!), et many ceteras. More anecdotally entertaining than insightful, but I've been wanting to hear some of these anecdotes in the first person for decades, so surely that counts for something.

Paul Wilson says

Pretty good autobiography. I would have preferred more insights to "Sorcerer" and "Cruising," but "The Exorcist" is his most famous movie, so it makes sense that most of his film career would cover it more in-depth.

Tom Stamper says

I have only seen two Friedkin films, Blue Chips which was entertaining enough and the French Connection that I found a bit slow moving for a action thriller. Luckily I heard an interview with Friedkin last year that made me read this. I'm glad I did because it's among the better Hollywood memoirs I have read. First, Friedkin doesn't dwell on his private life, his girlfriends, and his wives. He spends the pages telling us about his career in TV and movies mostly going chronologically relating his education as he went along. He has a rare ability to look back on his earlier work and not only see the faults in it, but understand how his youthful exuberance would sometimes lead him to the wrong conclusions.

He's honest. Rather than defend decisions that were poor he admits his mistakes. He admits he risked his life and the lives of others to get a certain shot. He admits that he spent some of the counterfeit money from the movie TO LIVE AND DIE IN LA. He admits that his first documentary designed to free a man from death row was probably a mistake. The man he thought innocent was probably guilty after all. He should have cast Ali McGraw in the Sorcerer so that Steve McQueen would have taken the lead role. He paid off a NYC civil servant for permission to shoot the L-Train chase scene in French Connection.

Best of all, the book flows easily and stories are told well. I zoomed through the thing and I wasn't even expecting to finish when I began.
