



Ebert's Bigger Little Movie Glossary

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A fixture in Roger Ebert's Video Companion, the Glossary of Movie Terms has attempted to identify and label those clichés and inevitable developments that become wearying to the faithful movie lover. To that end, Ebert and loyal fans have penned wit-filled terms to create a virtual lexicon of the inane in film.

Ebert's Bigger Little Movie Glossary Details

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From Reader Review Ebert's Bigger Little Movie Glossary for online ebook

Scott says

Funny collection of movie cliches and stereotypes, a very fast read. Good snarky entertainment, these old conventions pretty much get the respect that they deserve.

Billie Pritchett says

Ebert's "Bigger" Little Movie Glossary (1999) is a set of terms that are supposed to apply to films in general, or at least films within certain genres. However, as I read it, I realized how often films rarely conform to this level of generality, hence underscoring Ebert et al.'s abilities as critics to adequately demonstrate the abundant number of film conventions. I'll give you three examples at random.

CLIDVIC (Climb from Despair to Victory). Formula for *Rocky* and all the *Rocky* rip-offs. Breaks plot into three parts: (1) defeat and despair; (2) rigorous training, usually shown in the form of would-be MTV videos; (3) victory, preferably ending in free-frame of triumphant video. (p. 41)

Kidding Battery. In horror films, when the hero/heroine jumps in a car while being pursued by the killer, the car never starts at the first crank. The following generic montage is used: Close-up shot of hero/heroine's face sweating. Face goes out of focus as background focuses to reveal killer approaching car. Close-up of ignition failing again to start engine. Repeat sequence as many times as necessary to match generic crescendo music. Finally, battery gives enough juice to start engine just a second before killer gets the would-be victim. Obviously, the battery was just kidding. (p. 104)

Radio Pictures. A character's dialogue describes what we can clearly see happening on the screen. Critic Rich Elias tags an all-time classic when he observes that Jack, in *Titanic*, says, "Let's get out of here! This place is flooded!" (p. 163).

You can read it, and see whatcha think.

Jill Hutchinson says

The late movie critic Roger Ebert is sorely missed by film fans who read his books and watched him on television giving a "thumbs up" or a "thumbs down" on a particular film(s). This little book takes on the inane situations that are constantly repeated in film after film and giving each of them a name. For example: **Bomb Defusion Rule** - no bomb can be defused if it is more than ten seconds away from detonation; or, **Joel's Observation** - Directors always make sure that air ducts are big enough to crawl around in.

You have seen every one of these situations in films you have viewed.....they are continuing cliches that we love anyway. A fun book

Charlotte says

I've skimmed this, and it's worth reading so to learn more about movie cliches. I revisit it every now and then.

Adam Wiggins says

This is a big glossary of movie tropes, like "meet cute" (romantic comedy first meetings) and "fruit cart" (noting that action movie sequences in marketplaces always overturn a fruit cart).

Probably a very innovative idea when he first wrote the book in 1994. But today, tvtropes.org does it better. Gave up in the I's.

Ryan says

For years, film critic extraordinaire Roger Ebert and his fans have been defining movie cliches in an ironic tone that reminds me of Ambrose Bierce's Devil's Dictionary.

Some of the best and most contributions come from fans Dawson Rambo, Merwyn Grote, and Andy Ihnatko.

Dominick says

This collection of film clichés, conventions, stereotypes, and so on will sometimes have you chuckling in recognition, or smacking your forehead because you never noticed that one, or occasionally frowning in puzzlement at one that just does not seem to work. Overall, it's a fun, light, amusing bathroom book.
