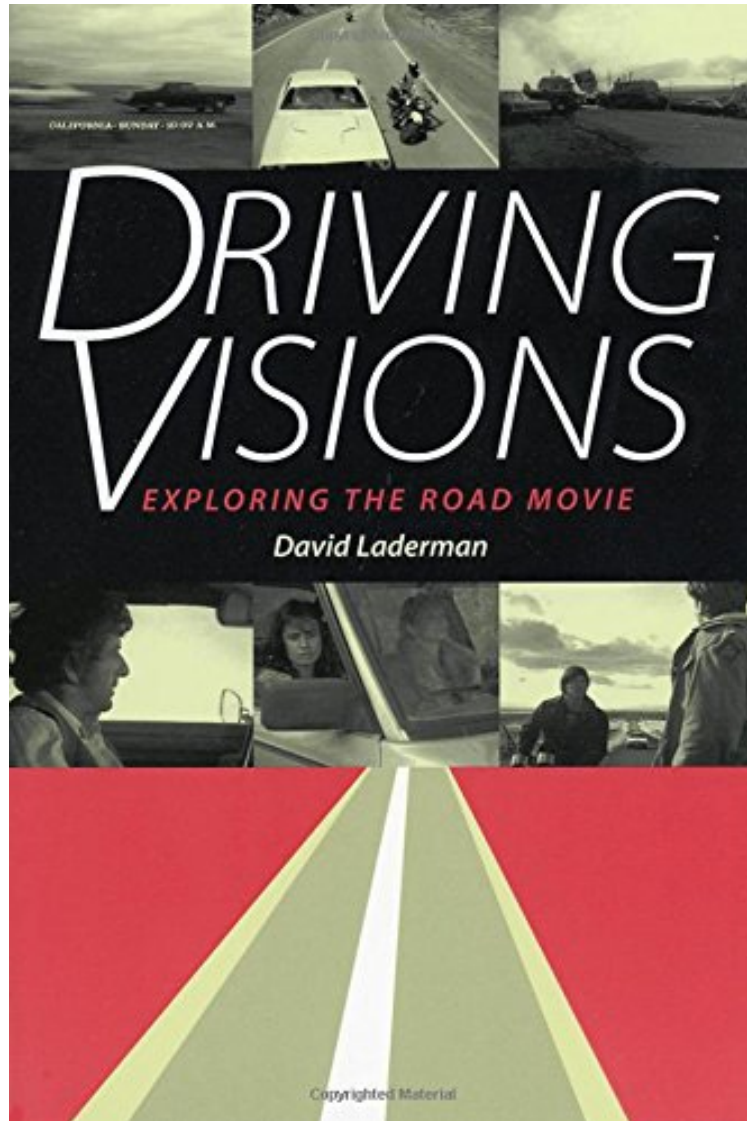


## Driving Visions: Exploring the Road Movie

David Laderman

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**David Laderman : Driving Visions: Exploring the Road Movie** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Driving Visions: Exploring the Road Movie:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. good class, great teacher but the book is a ...By kelsoif you're buying this book, you are probably taking professor ladderman's literature into film course based around road movies/novels. good class, great teacher but the book is a little monotonous to read.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy MK VajSorry for taking forever, but I'm very thankful for this book!0 of 7 people found the following

review helpful. If You Want to Read Film Theory, I Guess This is For You By Leonard Kirke I was required to buy this book for a film theory class that I was required to take for my film minor. Simply put: I don't understand why film theory, or literary theory, exists, or at least I don't understand why it's considered a valid academic discipline. It's great for late-night conversations during your college years, the kinds of navel-gazing conversation where one talks about Life, the Universe and Everything, but what value it has beyond that, let alone enough to justify it being part of a college curriculum, is beyond me. I find literary theory and film theory writing boring and pointless, and more than often, pretentious. If that's what you're seeking, this book is probably for you. Some of the arguments made within it struck me as outright nonsensical at times, or at least a tremendous stretch. Nonetheless, there's probably enough valid film theory argument in here for it to be worth your while if film theory is what you seek. If you aren't interested in film theory, avoid this book.

From the visionary rebellion of *Easy Rider* to the reinvention of home in *The Straight Story*, the road movie has emerged as a significant film genre since the late 1960s, able to cut across a wide variety of film styles and contexts. Yet, within the variety, a certain generic core remains constant: the journey as cultural critique, as exploration beyond society and within oneself. This book traces the generic evolution of the road movie with respect to its diverse presentations, emphasizing it as an "independent genre" that attempts to incorporate marginality and subversion on many levels. David Laderman begins by identifying the road movie's defining features and by establishing the literary, classical Hollywood, and 1950s highway culture antecedents that formatively influenced it. He then traces the historical and aesthetic evolution of the road movie decade by decade through detailed and lively discussions of key films. Laderman concludes with a look at the European road movie, from the late 1950s auteurs through Godard and Wenders, and at compelling feminist road movies of the 1980s and 1990s.

From *Library Journal* In 1934, audiences swooned when reporter Clark Gable and heiress Claudette Colbert bickered and then fell in love on a cross-country bus trip in *It Happened One Night*, an early American road trip movie. America's vast open spaces, colorful and varied locations, multicultural population, and love for cars, mobility, and speed make the road movie a peculiarly (though not exclusively) American fixture. This book is an academic study of American road movies as a "rebellion against conservative social norms" with "an embrace of the journey as a means of cultural critique." The emphasis here is on "outlaw" road movies. Laderman (film, Coll. of San Mateo) discusses literary sources and visions (*On the Road*), gay road movies (*My Own Private Idaho*), Native American films (*Smoke Signals*), and African American (*Get on the Bus*) and feminist road journeys. He dismisses most comedies, saying they fail to "incorporate any visionary rebellion." Indeed, the author's tone is humorless throughout. His complaint about "heavy-handed" irony in *Raising Arizona*, for instance, seems to be based on the fact that the irrepressible Coen brothers failed to follow his vision of what a road movie should be. There are some provocative ideas here, but Laderman's rigid approach causes the book to run out of gas. An optional purchase for large American film collections. Stephen Rees, Levittown Regional Lib., PA Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. "This is a superbly conceived, thoughtfully organized, and well-written study of a subject the road movie that has lacked anything close to a coherent, book-length overview. . . . It will make an ideal course text and should also have a wide appeal to non-academic readers." (Scott Simmon, author of *The Films of D. W. Griffith and King Vidor*, American) "This is a superbly conceived, thoughtfully organized, and well-written study of a subject the road movie that has lacked anything close to a coherent, book-length overview. . . . It will make an ideal course text and should also have a wide appeal to non-academic readers." (Scott Simmon, author of *The Films of D. W. Griffith and King Vidor*, American)