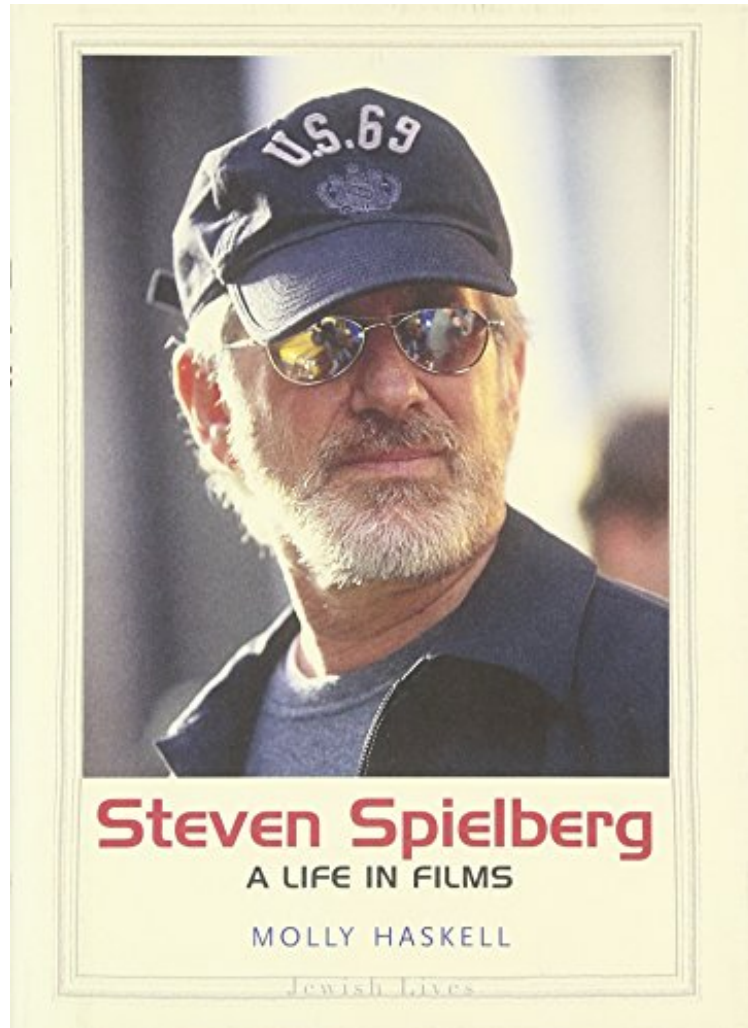


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Steven Spielberg: A Life in Films (Jewish Lives)

Molly Haskell

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Molly Haskell : Steven Spielberg: A Life in Films (Jewish Lives) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Steven Spielberg: A Life in Films (Jewish Lives):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Insightful and entertainingBy Kindle CustomerIm of two minds about Steven Spielberg. I share the general belief that hes a brilliant showman. I think that "Jaws," for example, might be the best adventure film ever made. On the other hand, I hold Spielberg largely if indirectly responsible for the sorry state of Hollywood today, with its glut of franchise movies and over-emphasis of special effects. Not to mention studios will teenage boys like it? marketing mentality.The publisher was wise to assign this short-but-insightful Spielberg biography to Haskell, a renowned critic who appreciates the filmmakers talent and influence but is not, by her own admission, a die-hard fan. Haskell's chapters are chronological, linking Spielbergs personal life and evolution

to the plots and themes of his movies. I didn't always agree with her evaluations, but her prose is unfailingly thought-provoking. To me, the book is most interesting in the chapters about early Spielberg, when the wunderkind was setting the world on fire with energetic, imaginative blockbusters like "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and "Raiders of the Lost Ark." Later films like "Empire of the Sun," "Amistad," and "Lincoln" might hold more appeal for a serious analyst like Haskell, but I've always felt that when it comes to a Steven Spielberg movie, popcorn is more palatable than polemics. [grouchyeditor.com](#) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A biography that intertwines film criticism and Judaism By Michael Jolls Molly Haskell tackles the task of outlining the correlation between Spielberg's films and own life story - evident when following his interviews. "E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial"; "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade"; and "Catch Me If You Can" openly reflect Spielberg's own life story, which Haskell does an excellent job of articulating, whereas pictures like "Amistad" and "Munich" are a product of his own agendas. My paperback is still dripping yellow ink from all the highlighted marks. Sadly, the Academy Award inaccuracies ("Saving Private Ryan" did not win Best Picture; Chiwetel Ejiofor did not win Best Actor for "12 Years A Slave") are unforgivable - yet that mistake reflects poorly on the editing team. Direct blame to Haskell is unwarranted. "Saving Private Ryan" losing Best Picture remains the greatest faux pas amongst the Spielberg fans, and it shows a lack of interest on the part of the publishing team for not knowing one of the hot-button-issues on its subject. Personally, while Haskell should be commended for giving extensive treatment to "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" and "Bridge of Spies", to see "War Horse" reduced to mere paragraph was the most disappointing aspect of the book. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Connecting the dots in a long career. By AxeMan After watching, I thought, almost all of his films for decades, I was shocked to know about what I had missed or not known that he had his hand in. Haskell has told the story in a very interesting way, making him so much less of a mystery. Dots were connected, failures and victories were given substance, even if I disagreed with her evaluation of one film or another. Makes me want to re-watch several, and I have seen many several times. His Jewish journey was a familiar story that made me consider my own, which was entirely different and has turned out to remain that way. Reading a film critic looking at her colleagues, past and present, was a satisfying experience.

A film-centric portrait of the extraordinarily gifted movie director whose decades-long influence on American popular culture is unprecedented Everything about me is in my films, Steven Spielberg has said. Taking this as a key to understanding the hugely successful moviemaker, Molly Haskell explores the full range of Spielbergs works for the light they shine upon the man himself. Through such powerhouse hits as Close Encounters of the Third Kind, E.T., Jurassic Park, and Indiana Jones, to lesser-known masterworks like A.I. and Empire of the Sun, to the haunting Schindlers List, Haskell shows how Spielbergs uniquely evocative filmmaking and story-telling reveal the many ways in which his life, work, and times are entwined. Organizing chapters around specific films, the distinguished critic discusses how Spielbergs childhood in non-Jewish suburbs, his parents traumatic divorce, his return to Judaism upon his sons birth, and other events echo in his work. She offers a brilliant portrait of the extraordinary director a fearful boy living through his imagination who grew into a man whose openness, generosity of spirit, and creativity have enchanted audiences for more than 40 years.

"'Everything about me is in my films,' Spielberg once said. Yet in this compact study of a sprawling career, Haskell comes close to presenting a unified theory of a director who entertains multitudes, and contains them too." Victoria Segal, Sunday Times