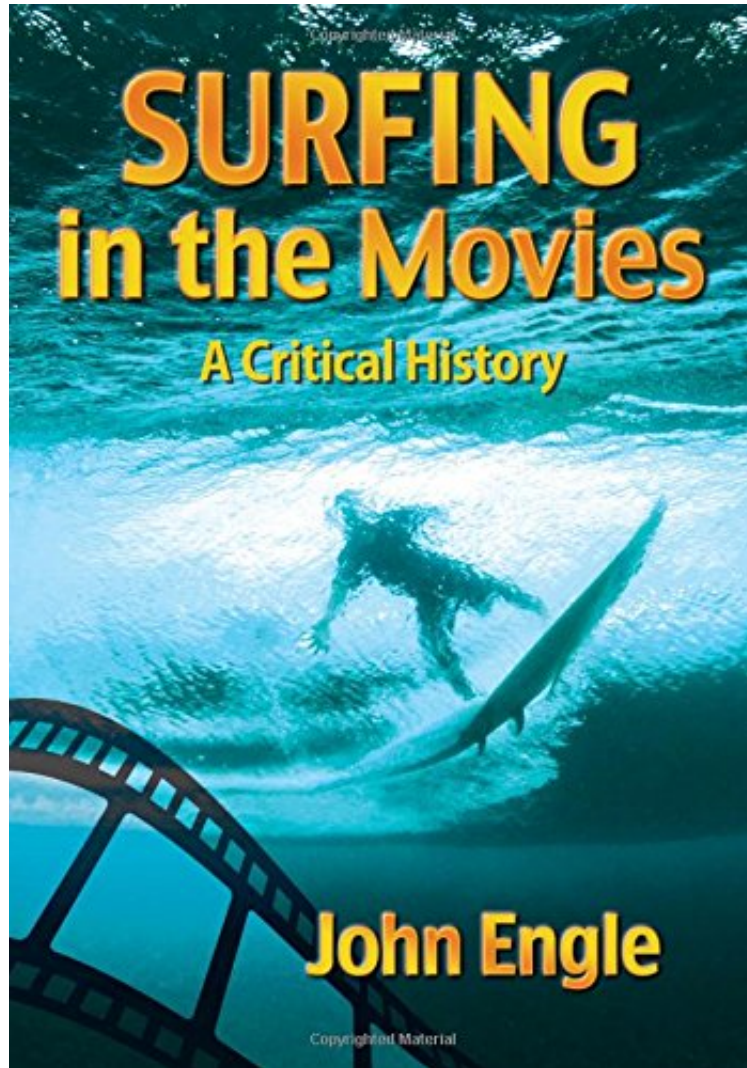


[Free] Surfing in the Movies: A Critical History

## Surfing in the Movies: A Critical History

*John Engle*

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**John Engle : Surfing in the Movies: A Critical History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Surfing in the Movies: A Critical History:

Since a Thomas Edison crew shot Waikiki beachboys in 1906, the visual delights and cultural curiosities of surfing have fascinated filmmakers. That relationship is the subject of "Surfing in the Movies," the first full-length work to combine the historical details of surfing's representation in cinema with a close critical attention to hundreds of the most important individual films. Before the 1950's surf culture boom, surfing showed up in travelogues or as exotic

background in studio features and cartoons. Gidget's arrival on the big screen in 1959 swept the sport into popular culture, but already creative surfer-filmmakers were featuring the day's best surfers in dozens of enthusiastic two-reelers self-narrated along the beach circuit. From Bud Browne's earliest efforts through "The Endless Summer," "Riding Giants," and today's often brilliant videos, over 1000 "surf movies" have celebrated the stoke. Hollywood and independent filmmakers have followed suit, producing several dozen surfing stories in the last half-century from the frothy Beach Party movies through "Point Break" and "Chasing Mavericks." Whether made for sandy beach community theaters or inland multiplexes, surf movies of every sort have celebrated the stunning beauty and visceral thrill of surfing, as well as the enduring attractions and marginal positionings of the surfing life. For decades they have also charted its real-life contradictions, including the insistent pressures of competition, the star system, and merchandising, not to mention such recurring issues as sexism and cultural imperialism. In "Surfing in the Movies: A Critical History," John Engle examines the various meanings of surfing and its cinematic representations through the work of dozens of important surfer filmmakers and videographers, including Bruce Brown, Greg MacGillivray, Alby Falzon, Jack McCoy, Thomas Campbell, Jack Johnson, and Taylor Steele. The studio and independent narrative productions covered include such films as "Gidget," "Big Wednesday," "Drift," "Soul Surfer," "Puberty Blues," "In God's Hands," and "Blue Crush". Analyzing both recurring patterns and the precise critical choices informing hundreds of individual films, "Surfing in the Movies" frames a new understanding of a fascinating cinematic genre.