

(Mobile book) 8 1/2 (BFI Film Classics)

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D. A. Miller

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D. A. Miller : 8 1/2 (BFI Film Classics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 8 1/2 (BFI Film Classics):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy JeffGreat product, great timing.5 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Fellini Viewed from a Small BoxBy mothbulbJust when I thought this book held Federico Fellini to impossibly high intellectual standards the author, D. A. Miller, penned this gem of movie star idolatry -Before Montgomery Clift first turns to the camera in A Place in the Sun (1951), we have looked at his back throughout the entire opening credits. But when we do finally see him, it is well worth the wait: a full ten seconds of Clift in increasingly tight close-up, while the strings in Franz Waxman's orchestra all rise in salute. But here, on his

spectacular emergence from a cocoon of shadows, Marcello Mastroianni seems more a shrunken head than a countenance in glory. Maybe that's the point Fellini tries to make. This isn't about the Hollywood treatment for one of their stars. Mastroianni plays a depressed man with a bad liver in mid-life crisis. I haven't a problem with approaching a movie from an intellectual premise but Miller mistakes the pursuit of intellectual purity for actual intelligence and ultimately comes away appearing obtuse, unable to understand the artistic medium he strenuously attempts to explain with tongue twisting professorial language such as this: Only now does he seem fully incarnate, the authorial word made characterological flesh. Beneath the learned vocabulary Miller appears much as a nave freshman literature student intent on finding deep, intellectually valid meaning, behind every stroke of the author's master pen. His criteria would put Fellini and every artistic movie director in a bureaucratic strait-jacket designed by academics that require a thesaurus to experience life. I'm giving the book three stars because I know there is a small audience somewhere dying to spent an afternoon laboring through 109 pages of intellectual twiddle... as I just did. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. One of Cinema's Greatest Films Gets an Excellent Book By Public Cynic At first I was a bit apprehensive about reading this. 8 1/2 is a film I hold very dear to me, and is one of my favorite films. I should've known it would've been as good as it was considering it's a BFI release. D.A. Miller discusses how over time, the initial shock of the images and struture of the film make it look a lot less like the exciting piece of art it was, but instead has become something different, more tender and even modest. Miller spends a lot of time analyzing every detail of the film from it's alternate ending to Fellini's love of the female butt. Very entertaining and quick read, very in depth, and an excellent accompaniment to the Criterion edition of the film.

Federico Fellini's masterpiece 8 1/2 (*Otto e mezzo*) shocked audiences around the world when it was released in 1963 by its sheer auteurist gall. The hero, a film director named Guido Anselmi, seemed to be Fellini's mirror image, and the story to reflect the making of 8 1/2 itself. Whether attacked for self-indulgence or extolled for self-consciousness, 8 1/2 became the paradigm of personal filmmaking, and numerous directors, including Martin Scorsese, Woody Allen and Bruce LaBruce, paid homage to it in their own work. Now that 8 1/2's conceit is less shocking, D.A. Miller argues, we can see more clearly how tentative, even timid, Fellin's ground-breaking incarnation always was. Guido is a perfect blank, or is trying his best to seem one. By his own admission he doesn't even have an artistic or social statement to offer: 'I have nothing to say, but I want to say it anyway.' 8 1/2's deepest commitment is not to this man (who is never quite 'all there') or to his message (which is lacking entirely) but to its own flamboyant manner. The enduring timeliness of 8 1/2 lies, Miller suggests, in its aggressive shirking of the shame that falls on the man and the artist who fails his appointed social responsibilities.