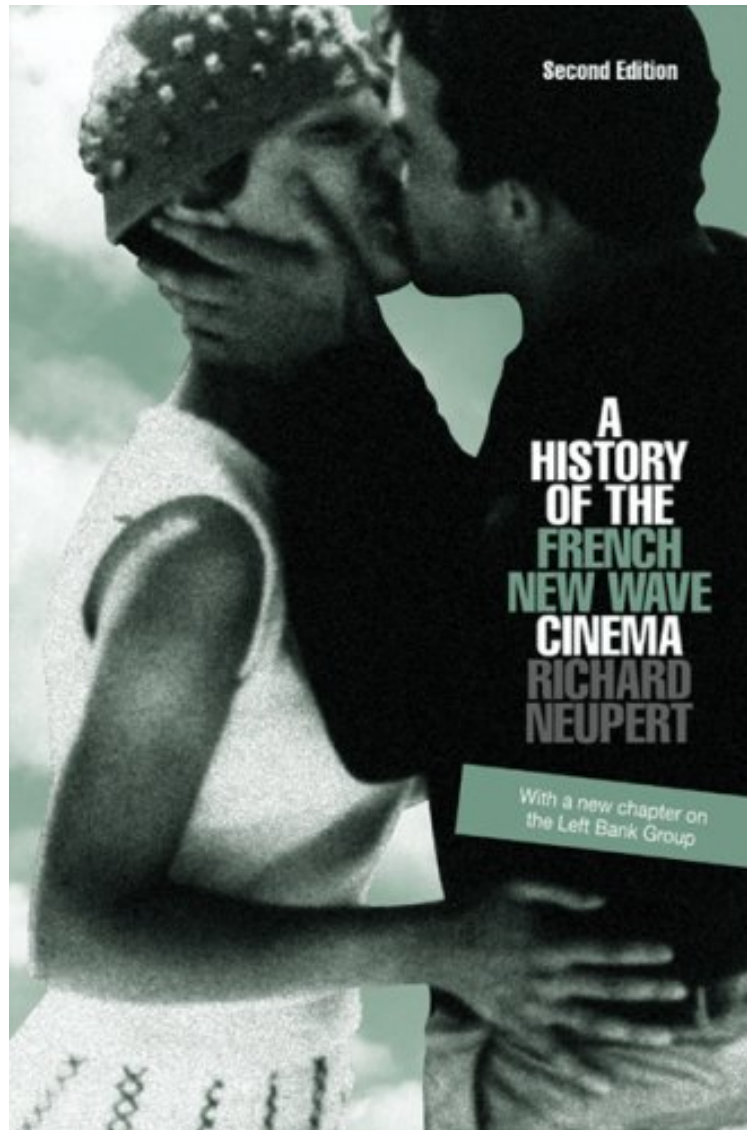


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## A History of the French New Wave Cinema (Wisconsin Studies in Film)

*Richard Neupert*

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**Richard Neupert : A History of the French New Wave Cinema (Wisconsin Studies in Film)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A History of the French New Wave Cinema (Wisconsin Studies in Film):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Neupert's Nouvelle Vague: Like having been there at the timeBy Dr Ren CodoniNeupert's Nouvelle Vague: Like having been there at the timeMy cinema education was parallel to the

French nouvelle vague, from 1959 onwards I saw whatever had come out. Zurich (or Basle or occasionally even Paris) was close enough to get the new films quite fast, sometimes even without subtitles (yet). Neupert's brilliant history is like he had been present also - which he wasn't; but I, as an eye witness, can vouch for his authenticity. His amount of detail is well documented, complete and correct, like of Pierre Kast's *Le bel age* (1960), in an opus hardly found elsewhere. Having, after nearly fifty years, gone through literally all the nouvelle vague movies again at least once last year, I am very happy to have updated my memory. Dvd is simply wonderful compared to the various old systems of wheels and celluloid, so it needs to be a very poor copy to remind me of scratches, missing sound track and unevenly fixed torn or cut out pieces of film - very common occurrences in the past - to ever complain today. Another question are the extras, which were normally totally insignificant in the past. The chronological approach has its advantages: What is or is not really nouvelle vague is not a conceptual problem, but judgment quickly made: So Malle's *L'ascenseur* and *Les amants* (both 1958) were clearly NV, as was Jacques Demy's *Lola* (1961) and Resnais' *Hiroshima mon amour* (1959), despite most appearing before the classic firsts of the Cahiers-Groupe, notably Truffaut and Godard. And what was really Chabrol's first? Whether it had ended by 1963 was an academic question as long as the right type of films, eg Rohmer's, were still forthcoming. Which does not mean that, as a contemporary, you did not feel that things were changing. The breakneck speed at which Godard produced two movies a year, Truffaut and Chabrol hardly behind, with increasingly diversified topics and variable budgets and sophistication - it seemed like new directors just needed a minimum team, which on demand could be expanded to considerably larger and more complex plots, and had no problem picking up the skills. Pola'ski, though living in France, but not NV, is also a later classic case for that. To what extent the notions of films d'auteur and mise en scene were really key motors, to me, is also still undecided. That there is much existentialist philosophy embedded, especially in the earlier productions, is perhaps best shown by one of the most comprehensive love stories cum sociological analysis, Demy's still very touching *Lola*. It had, like Truffaut's *Tirez sur le Pianiste* (1960) and *La peau douce* (1964), another set of gems, very bad box office showings - one more reasons to follow Neupert's list and see them all again! fbus 7 - 5 January 2012 15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Excellent overview of the nouvelle vague By MarkusG Very well written overview of the films that defined the french New Wave. The first chapter explains the historical, economic, political and cultural context (post-war France) and explains why there was a demand for a new kind of cinema. Remaining chapters presents directors like Melville, Truffaut, Godard, Varda, Resnais, Malle and some more with biographical info and film analysis. Each film analysis is excellent and made me go and buy the movies on DVD. Fortunately, almost every movie presented in the book has been released on high quality DVD from labels like Criterion, Masters of Cinema and BFI. Even early films like Melville's *Silence de la Mer* is now available. To sum up: I can really recommend the book to everyone who wants to know more about French Cinema, and understand the New Wave in particular. It's very well written and very clear on a subject that in other cases has been presented in an over-theorized way. Great job! 10 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book By Michael Smith Very good book outlining the New WVe in a very pleasing way. With an additional section written about left bank directors. Only director I wish it added was Jacques Demy.

The French New Wave cinema is arguably the most fascinating of all film movements, famous for its exuberance, daring, and avant-garde techniques. *A History of the French New Wave Cinema* offers a fresh look at the social, economic, and aesthetic mechanisms that shaped French film in the 1950s, as well as detailed studies of the most important New Wave movies of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Richard Neupert first tracks the precursors to New Wave cinema, showing how they provided blueprints for those who would follow. He then demonstrates that it was a core group of critics-turned-directors from the magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma* especially François Truffaut, Claude Chabrol, and Jean-Luc Godard who really revealed that filmmaking was changing forever. Later, their cohorts Eric Rohmer, Jacques Rivette, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze, and Pierre Kast continued in their own unique ways to expand the range and depth of the New Wave. In an exciting new chapter, Neupert explores the subgroup of French film practice known as the Left Bank Group, which included directors such as Alain Resnais and Agnès Varda. With the addition of this new material and an updated conclusion, Neupert presents a comprehensive review of the stunning variety of movies to come out of this important era in filmmaking.

From *Library Journal* In this first history of the French New Wave to be written in English, Neupert (film studies, Univ. of Georgia) traces the development and maturation of the movement through the social, economic, and artistic atmosphere of the 1950s and 1960s and its numerous directors and supporters. He begins with forerunners like Agnès Varda and Jean-Pierre Melville and then moves on to early leaders like Roger Vadim and Louis Malle. Finally, he focuses on the critical group of François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, and Claude Chabrol - one-time critics for the leading film journal *Cahiers du Cinéma* who created some of the most innovative and exhilarating European films of the last century. Refreshingly jargon-free and full of interesting details and anecdotes, this book is a pleasure to read. Since most works treat individual directors rather than the movement as a whole, Neupert's book is highly recommended for academic libraries and large public libraries with strong film studies collections. Andrea Slonosky,

Long Island Univ. Lib., Brooklyn, NY Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Neupert offers brilliant analyses, whether of familiar or neglected films . . . [giving] a masterful sense of the movement, its sources, character, and its continuing influence. Essential."Choice