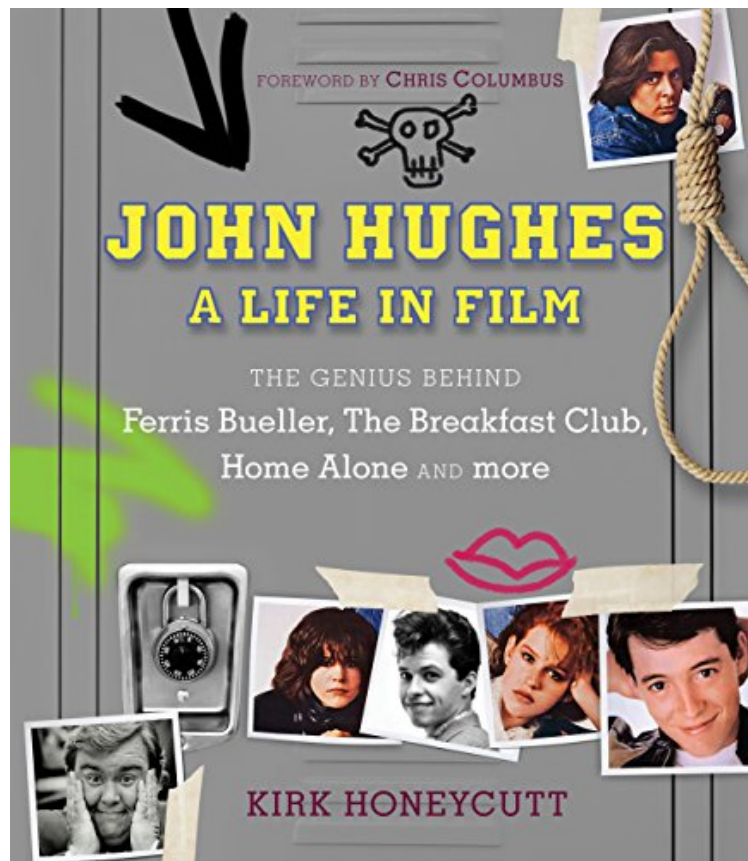


[Read now] John Hughes: A Life in Film: The Genius Behind Ferris Bueller, The Breakfast Club, Home Alone, and more

John Hughes: A Life in Film: The Genius Behind Ferris Bueller, The Breakfast Club, Home Alone, and more

Kirk Honeycutt

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Kirk Honeycutt : John Hughes: A Life in Film: The Genius Behind Ferris Bueller, The Breakfast Club, Home Alone, and more before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Hughes: A Life in Film: The Genius Behind Ferris Bueller, The Breakfast Club, Home Alone, and more:

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. This 200-page coffee table book is beautifully designed with some great photosBy melissa ranieriAs someone who grew up in Chicago in the 1980s and 90s, I have long anticipated an in-depth book about the life and career of the incredibly talented, prolific and somewhat mysterious John Hughes. Unfortunately, I must continue waiting. This 200-page coffee table book is beautifully designed with some great photos, and provides all the necessary surface information about Hughes and his career, but the content lacks depth, and is devoid of any real revelation.Right off the bat, the book admits in its opening pages that the Hughes family as well as some of his closest friends all refused to be interviewed, immediately squashing any hope of getting some in-depth insight into Hughes and his departure from Hollywood. Also, the book is loaded with typos and errors. For

example, on page 3, a set photo of Hughes, Molly Ringwald and Michael Schoeffling on the set of SIXTEEN CANDLES is misidentified as being from the set of PRETTY IN PINK. While this error may seem minor and mistakes do indeed happen, one would think an editor would try to ensure that at least the first ten pages are near perfect, for if the author demonstrates in the first three pages that he apparently cannot tell the filmmaker's films apart, why should the reader believe he is worthy of writing an entire book on the man? The opening chapters about Hughes working as an ad man at Leo Burnett while moonlighting as a joke writer and magazine editor were thankfully fulfilling. I always wanted to learn more about his start, and how he maintained his career from Chicago. However, the examination of Hughes's films are incredibly uneven, and disappointing as a result. While both SIXTEEN CANDLES and especially Hughes's most famous film THE BREAKFAST CLUB are richly profiled (23 pages are dedicated to the latter alone), other beloved Hughes classics like PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES are restricted to only a few pages. Hughes's screenplays are some of the most enjoyable reads because they often include extensive material--scenes, characters and at times even entire subplots--that were subsequently cut from the final film. While Honeycutt includes some of these interesting omissions for some films, he neglects to detail them for others (He neglects to mention a draft of PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES that reveals John Candy's Del Griffin has actually been manipulating some of the film's events so that Steve Martin's Neil Page will be forced to spend the holiday with him. A revelation that would've totally changed the nature of the character). This uneven approach gets even more frustrating as it moves into Hughes's family-centric comedies of the 90s. Only two light pages are dedicated to Hughes's final directorial effort CURLY SUE, and some of his late films are relegated to a couple paragraphs. For a 90s kid, these films were just as much a part of one's childhood as his classic teen comedies of the 80s, and I wanted more. Some of Hughes' films are more or less skipped. EUROPEAN VACATION is reduced to a sidebar, and perhaps Hughes's least known film, REACH THE ROCK is mentioned in only a few brief sentences. Also, Honeycutt's tendency to insert his own personal criticism of a number of the films proves tedious, and at times calls into question how much he personally enjoyed Hughes's filmography. While the man is certainly entitled to his opinion, (I agree with his negative review of PRETTY IN PINK, but disagree with the same opinion of SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL), he dismisses CHRISTMAS VACATION as "a tepid affair" that "wastes an unusually fine cast" with "predictable and contrived" slapstick that "falls short--no pun intended." All this despite its 7.5 rating on IMDb and current status as a holiday classic that often plays for a 24-hour stretch on Christmas. Again, he is entitled to his opinion, but a coffee table book dedicated to a specific filmmaker hardly feels like the proper venue to voice it, unless he was that desperate to fill these 200 pages. But the biggest letdown is the surprising lack of examination into Hughes's post-Hollywood life. For this reason specifically, I would personally recommend David Kamp's lengthy VANITY FAIR article "Sweet Bard of Youth," that was published in March 2010, which is a far more satisfying examination of Hughes's departure from public life than this book. Unlike Honeycutt, Kamp managed to interview Hughes's two sons, John III and James, who provided a picture of how Hughes continued to write endlessly during his retirement, and even profiles his final days and morning in great detail with a poignant ending. Unfortunately, Honeycutt devotes only a few brief pages to this segment of Hughes's life, the chapter I'd imagine the majority of fans are most curious about. It's a pretty book, and it possesses a superficial overview of Hughes's work. For that I shall keep it on my shelf for any of my fellow Hughes fans to thumb through, but I continue to pine for that definitive and insightful book on one of my favorite filmmakers.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. but much more interested in recollections and historical significance of the bigger films like Breakfast Club

By R. Zachariah Milwood

As a huge film fan, and in particular a John Hughes fan, I found this book strangely lacking in depth. There seemed to be little new information, and most astonishing to me was the lack of context, how impactful his films have been. Sure I'm interested on the surface about Baby's Day Out, but much more interested in recollections and historical significance of the bigger films like Breakfast Club, Ferris Bueller, and Sixteen Candles. This is a decent light read, but given the heft of the book and the cost, I would have liked much more meat.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. HUGHES IS A LEGEND

By Mike Motty

I loved this book. I learned a lot of information about John Hughes.

"There's no way I'm going to end a movie on a negative note." - John Hughes

He allegedly wrote Ferris Bueller's Day Off in four days, Planes, Trains and Automobiles in three days, The Breakfast Club in two days, and Vacation in a week. He never went to film school or studied cinema. And he spent most of his incredible career in the Midwest, far from the Hollywood Hills. John Hughes was indeed one of the most prolific and successful filmmakers in Hollywood history. He helped launch the careers of Andrew McCarthy, Molly Ringwald, Anthony Michael Hall, Macaulay Culkin, and Judd Nelson. He made John Candy a household name. In this first illustrated tribute to the legendary filmmaker, author Kirk Honeycutt offers a behind-the-scenes look at the genius that was John Hughes--from his humble beginnings in direct mail to his blockbuster success with classics like Pretty in Pink, Sixteen Candles, Weird Science, and Home Alone. Honeycutt also explores the darker side of John Hughes: his extreme sensitivity, his stormy professional relationships, and the devastation Hughes experienced after the death of his closest friend, John Candy. Featuring fresh interviews with Matthew Broderick, Ally Sheedy, Judd Nelson, Steve Martin, and Jon Cryer, and a

foreword from Home Alone director Chris Columbus, this is the must-read for fans of John Hughes. "This biography is a fascinating portrait of a brilliant, complex, and wonderful man. John Hughes forever transformed my world, and I am grateful for such a wonderful tribute." - Ally Sheedy "John Hughes always treated me with respect and consideration, and was most generous with his insight. As a result of Mr. Honeycutt's detailed research, we learn John Hughes the person was even more impressive than John Hughes the writer/director. Reading this book was a bittersweet experience, making me feel the size of the loss of his premature passing. But it also confirmed for me that John Hughes was a giant, and under his great shadow I am fortunate to remain." - Judd Nelson

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