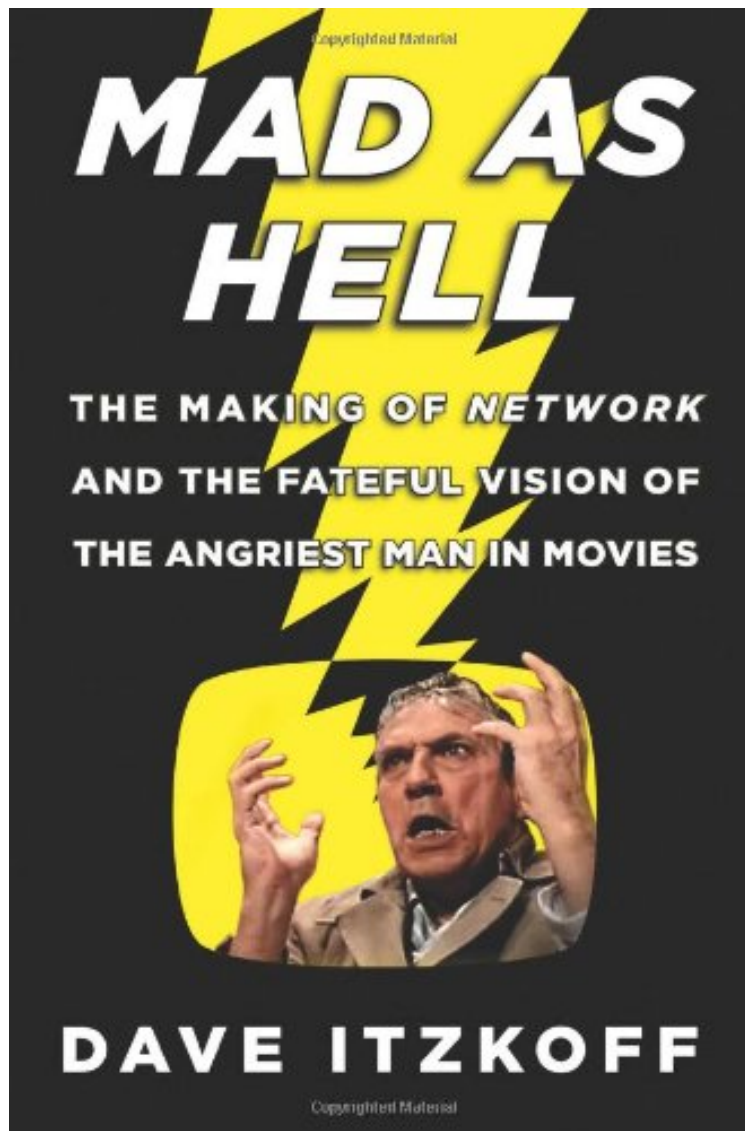


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Dave Itzkoff

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Dave Itzkoff : Mad as Hell: The Making of Network and the Fateful Vision of the Angriest Man in Movies before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mad as Hell: The Making of Network and the Fateful Vision of the Angriest Man in Movies:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. I'm mad as hell, but not about this bookBy allandalePaddy

Chayefsky is still my favorite screenwriter. "Network," "The Hospital," and "Marty," are all on my personal top films list, and I've seen most films of consequence, classic or modern, American or Foreign. As a freelance writer, covering film as a reviewer, essayist or reporter has been part of my output from the very beginning when I reviewed "2001" when it first came out for my college newspaper. Since then I've written about film for three city magazines, a business monthly, OMNI magazine, Starlog, and online. Chayefsky won me early with "Marty," but both "Hospital," and "Network" were something else: prescient and biting satires perhaps even more telling now than when they were filmed. Back then, many people pooh-poohed "Network" as fantasy. No so much since, as much of what Chayefsky saw has become reality. "Mad as Hell: The Making of Network," traces Chayefsky's career, but the emphasis is solidly on the making of Network, not the back story. It's a fascinating tale. Not as fascinating as Chayefsky's screenplays, but entertaining and informative all the way. He offers insight into the how the actors, director and everyone involved felt about their roles and the script. This was Holden's last credible role as a romantic lead, craggy and believable as the Edward R. Murrow type of newsman turned network news exec. Faye Dunaway was troublesome, particularly over her tasteful and brief nude scene, but one thing comes through it all. Paddy Chayefsky didn't let anyone mess with his script, not actors, not the director, not the producers. Who else has had anything like that power as a scriptwriter? Woody Allen, maybe. The most amazing thing about this book is all the carping from network news people and execs at the time. They were wrong. Chayefsky was right. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. What an enjoyable and outstanding book! By ecolescaup It has been several years since I enjoyed reading a book as much as I enjoyed reading this one. I have been an admirer of Network since its debut in 1976 and have been fascinated by Chayefsky, the actors, the characters, and the story line ever since. As laid out in this book, the background history of the aforementioned is truly fascinating, humorous at times, and inspiring. While reading this book, there were moments when the words brought tears to my eyes. It is true that many aspects of Network, its making, its impact, and its aftermath (e.g., actor deaths) were tragic. Author Itzkoff relates many interesting insights into all things Network and surrounding Network. Courtesy of the authors detailed writing about the subject, I managed to find on YouTube all of the clips from the 1977 and 1978 Academy Awards ceremony broadcasts. It was great to watch these clips and to simultaneously have the insight about them as a result of reading the book. I took my time reading this book. I would read 10-12 pages, then put the book down for a few days. I found that this gave me time to think over what I read. I also read the book in small parts because it seemed akin to having a great meal to eat: One fails to fully appreciate the opportunity if one just rushes through it all like so many people are prone to do with just about everything these days. In short, this book was truly a pleasure to read. I was sad when I reached the end. I wanted more. I could see re-reading it at some point. 9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Satire vs. Drama By George Putnam Mad as Hell vividly captures the result of one man's drive to show the world his anger and frustration at social injustice. Paddy Chayefsky's mouthpiece was his brilliant and provocative movie, Network, which, as reported by Dave Itzkoff, bore word by colorful word its author's vision of apocalypse at the corporate level of network news. But to confer importance on the movie as being prescient misses the whole point: it's satire. As such, it made no attempt to answer the many questions it raised about greed and lunacy in network television. During Chayefsky's promotion of the movie to TV hosts and others, when he complained that commercial television diminishes the import of individual lives, no one ever stopped him to ask, "So what would you do to reverse it?" Nor does any character in the movie address such a question; indeed, the film is a litany of rants stemming from rage at this or that. So when Mr. Itzkoff describes negative reactions to Network from contemporaries in the television business, one has to ask whether these people knew that had just seen a satire. If the movie had resolved the elements of the satire to satisfy dramatic requirements, the film would have had a point of view worthy of serious discussion. Even its author had no answers, which is why, in the end, he simply killed off the movie's agitprop. Over the years, I have prompted many friends to watch the movie or to watch it again. A good number of them, although having reported back to me how much they enjoyed it, also said that they fast-forwarded through Howard Beale's tirades. This is strange, because, among the principal characters, he seemed to be the only one to give a damn about human suffering.

The behind-the-scenes story of the making of the iconic movie "Network," which transformed the way we think about television and the way television thinks about us "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore!" Those words, spoken by an unhinged anchorman named Howard Beale, "the mad prophet of the airwaves," took America by storm in 1976, when "Network" became a sensation. With a superb cast (including Faye Dunaway, William Holden, Peter Finch, and Robert Duvall) directed by Sidney Lumet, the film won four Academy Awards and indelibly shaped how we think about corporate and media power. In "Mad As Hell," Dave Itzkoff of "The New York Times" recounts the surprising and dramatic story of how "Network" made it to the screen. Such a movie rarely gets made any more one man's vision of the world, independent of studio testing or market research. And that man was Paddy Chayefsky, the tough, driven, Oscar-winning screenwriter whose vision outlandish for its time is all too real today. Itzkoff uses interviews with the cast and crew, as well as Chayefsky's notes, letters, and drafts to re-create the action in front of and behind the camera at a time of swirling cultural turmoil. The result is a riveting account that enriches our appreciation of this prophetic and still-startling film. Itzkoff also speaks with today's leading broadcasters and filmmakers to assess

"Network"'s lasting impact on television and popular culture. They testify to the enduring genius of Paddy Chayefsky, who foresaw the future and whose life offers an unforgettable lesson about the true cost of self-expression."

From Booklist In Itzkoff's account of the durable 1970s film *Network*, the angriest man in the movies isn't the TV news anchor whose on-air crack-up propels the film's action. His screenwriter Paddy Chayefsky, whose distinctive stylized naturalism punctuated by long, articulate, strictly artificial harangues and proprietorship about his work (only his words, all of them, were to reach the soundtrack) made him the rare writer considered the auteur or prime creator of his films (usually the director takes that credit). Accounting for Chayefsky's anger proves hard for Itzkoff to put in so many words as he frames long, absorbing chapters about the preproduction, shooting, and reception (prominently including the many Oscars it won) of *Network* within briefs on Chayefsky before and after it. Most obviously, the writer kept his temper simmering to deal with the producers, directors, actors, and others who wanted to change things. Chayefsky also kept a passion for the worth of the common person throughout his career, and every insult to human dignity infuriated him. A making-of film book that's also a piquant biography. --Ray Olson

Itzkoff's engrossing, unfolding narrative contains the perfect amount of inside-baseball moviemaking stories and anecdotes about stars. It is an inspiring, conflict-driven account of the parade of the indignities and happy accidents that are always present when making a movie, even a great one. Rob Lowe, *The New York Times Book* Absorbing and revealing ... [Mad as Hell] garners insights into what made the film enduringly provocative and riveting. USA Today Between the time the covers were glued on [Itzkoff's] lively and terrifically detailed account and this very minute, the media world has become more Chayefskyan still.... Itzkoff's narrative is thorough yet brisk as he catalogs the good and the bad that befell Chayefsky and his passion project. It is fortified with vivid anecdotes. The New York Times Dave Itzkoff's account of how the brilliant, stubborn, and pugnacious Chayefsky did his research, wrote his script and, ultimately, imposed his vision on the film is elegantly executed.... Itzkoff is right to give Paddy Chayefsky his due as a cultural icon. Ted Koppel, NPR All Things Considered Dave Itzkoff's *Mad as Hell* chronicles not only Chayefsky's arduous efforts to get *Network* made but also the influence its several messages have had. Almost 40 years after *Network*, we're less mad than distracted, looking to be amused. We could use another Paddy Chayefsky. The Washington Post I salute Itzkoff for zooming in at book length on *Network*. The Atlantic Fun Offers a vivid portrait [and] great anecdotes. Maureen Dowd, *The New York Times* Dave Itzkoff takes us on an extraordinary journey, and in the process reveals Chayefsky's prognosis for TV, a prognosis we've chosen to ignore even as it comes true before our eyes. Forbes *Mad as Hell* reminds us of that era when the profession of screenwriting was revered, and some top writers could actually get a movie made. Chayefsky brought to films like *Hospital* and *Network* both anger and irony -- elements that go missing from *Monuments Men*. Variety Riveting a compelling portrait. Details In *Mad as Hell*, Itzkoff tells the story, lovingly and in depth, of the creation of a brilliant and important movie that would almost certainly never be made today. Itzkoff makes a convincing argument that Chayefsky was only using the news as a metaphor to reflect the degeneracy of empathy and decency. [Howard Beale] deserves to have his story told as deftly as Itzkoff has told it here. The Miami Herald Dave Itzkoff's book both meticulously reconstructs the making of the film and sketches, with depth and sensitivity, the complex, troubled life of its screenwriter-creator Paddy Chayefsky. The Daily Beast Briskly readable. San Francisco Chronicle Amply researched and highly readable. The Santa Fe New Mexican A terrific book by a New York Times writer about a film classic. The Buffalo News Itzkoff gives the film its due. More important, he shows just how vital one writer can be. Sioux City Journal *Mad as Hell* provides an in-depth account of the making of the 1976 film that's particularly impressive because almost four decades have passed since the late screenwriter Paddy Chayefsky brought *Network* to the big screen. The three-ring-circus that Beale's newscast morphs into certainly resembles some of the reality shows that fill network schedules today. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Itzkoff digs into every nook and cranny of the film's production--and also interviews contemporary television journalists such as Keith Olbermann, Bill O'Reilly and Anderson Cooper to discuss its impact. This is a very sharp and insightful book. Popular cultural history at its best. Shelf Awareness It's a joy to read and should be on the list of students of media and PR. We're all living in Paddy's world. Things won't change until we get as "mad as hell" as *Network*'s crazed visionary Howard Beale. O'Dwyer's [A] compellingly told story of the making and cultural effect of the 1976 Hollywood satire of the TV industry [and] a solid behind-the-scenes movie book. Fans of the film will find the book irresistible. Kirkus *Network*, the satirical masterpiece that won four Academy Awards in 1976, remains a cultural touchstone [and in *Mad as Hell*] Itzkoff peppers his straightforward and balanced narrative with plenty of juicy anecdotes but Itzkoff's real achievement is in his chilling analysis of *Network* as prophecy demonstrating through interviews with Anderson Cooper, Stephen Colbert, Bill O'Reilly, and others that Chayefsky's satire has become our reality. Publishers Weekly Absorbing [Chayefsky] kept a passion for the worth of the common person throughout his career, and every insult to human dignity infuriated him. A making-of film book that's also a piquant biography. Booklist Dave Itzkoff has written a sensational and definitive book about how the twentieth century's most important screenwriter came to write the twentieth century's most explosive movie. It's a loving and intelligent examination of what happens when talent and skill take common pain and anger and focus it into a magnificent work of art. I believe this is the first thing written about Paddy Chayefsky that Chayefsky would have liked. Watch *Network* and read this book. Aaron Sorkin,

creator of *The West Wing* and *The Newsroom* and screenwriter of *The Social Network* is still a movie worth arguing about, and Dave Izkoff shows us not just how this movie got made, but how, step by step and line by brilliant, argumentative line, it got written. This is one of the most rewarding books I've read about how a script evolves, and a tough, true and unsparing portrait of an extraordinary writer. Mark Harris, author of *Pictures at a Revolution: Five Movies and the Birth of the New Hollywood* Dave Izkoff does a terrific job of bringing this signal moment in movie history to life, conveying the larger significance without losing sight of the crazy day-to-day stuff that goes into the process -- the egos, uncertainty, desire, money, and power struggles that make us love to read about movie-making. And he does it all with an intensity and passion Paddy Chayefsky would admire. Julie Salamon, author of *The Devil's Candy* and *Wendy and the Lost Boys* This is that rarest of the biography of a movie' genre: the one that allows you to enjoy, in new ways you never dreamt of, the greatness of a perfect, prophetic film like *Network*. Keith Olbermann Dave Izkoff's account of the making of *Network*, Paddy Chayefsky's prescient if mordant x-ray of network news on its way down from its postwar heights to the pabulum it is today, makes for riveting reading. Peter Biskind, author of *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls* and editor of *My Lunches with Orson* The story of *Network* is the story of a prophetic screenwriter and his unrelenting determination to make the film that would not only change the way we looked at television, but free us to express our anger, individually and collectively. This is more than a book about a seminal movie. It's a book about a seminal moment in American history, told with grace, force, wit, and intelligence. Jonathan Mahler, author of *Ladies and Gentlemen, the Bronx Is Burning* This thorough and rousing book reminds us that Paddy Chayefsky, aside from being one of the knockdown smartest individuals Hollywood has ever allowed, ranked with its most visionary. *Mad As Hell* makes painfully clear how our country's tabloid ethic has only worsened in the years since this Paul Revere of screenwriters saw it coming four decades ago. We should have listened. Sam Wasson, author of *Fifth Avenue, 5 A.M.: Audrey Hepburn, Breakfast at Tiffany's, and the Dawn of the Modern Woman* Dave Izkoff has blessed us with a vivid and richly entertaining account of what goes on inside the making of a hit movie -- the mixture of intrigue, creativity, infighting, and astonishing behavior of the famous and the driven; all of which somehow came together to produce a superb motion picture. Not to be missed. Dick Cavett About the Author Dave Izkoff is a culture reporter at *The New York Times*, where he writes regularly about film, television, theater, music, and popular culture. He has previously worked at *Spin*, *Maxim*, and *Details*, and his work has appeared in *GQ*, *Vanity Fair*, *Wired*, and other publications. He is the author of two previous books, *Cocaine's Son* and *Lads*. He lives in New York City.