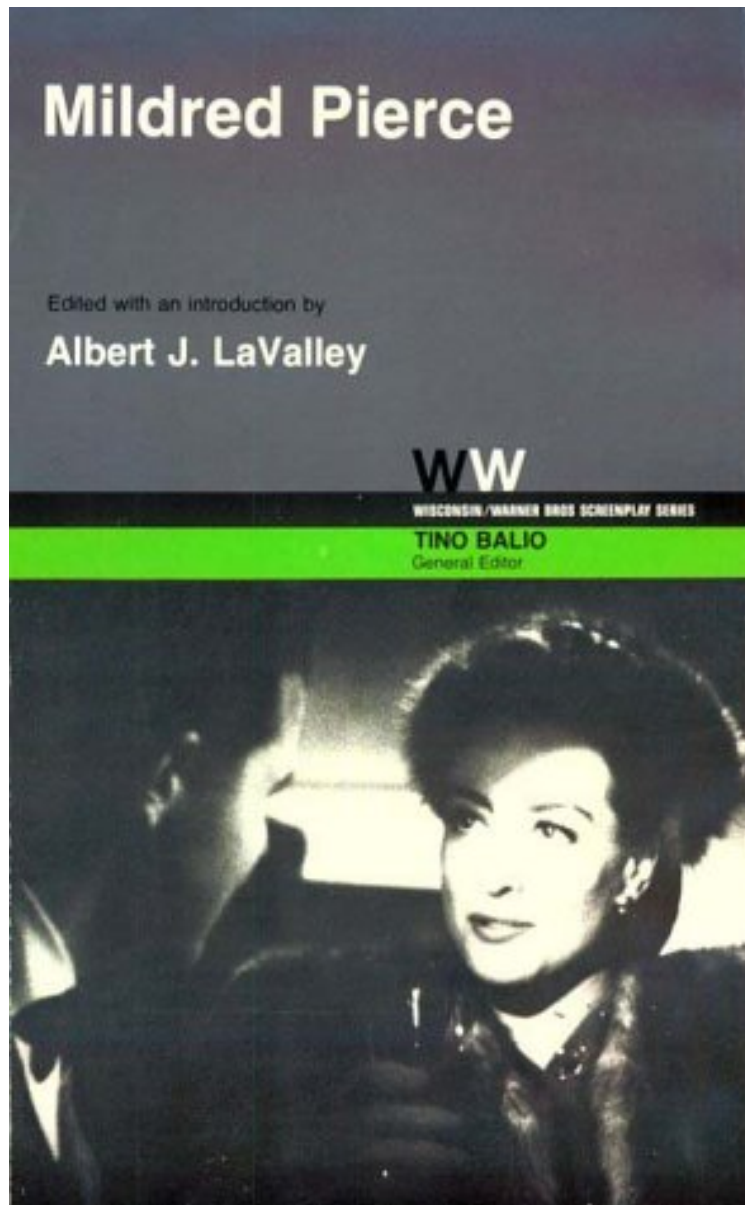


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Mildred Pierce (Wisconsin / Warner Bros. Screenplays)

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From University of Wisconsin Press : Mildred Pierce (Wisconsin / Warner Bros. Screenplays) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mildred Pierce (Wisconsin / Warner Bros. Screenplays):

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. A great story of the will to succeed, and how sometimes a persons

strengths can also be their greatest weaknesses

By M. Smith This is a well crafted story, great characters which you either love or hate, and with Mildred Pierce being someone whom I think most people can identify with on some level. It takes place during the Great Depression. Mildred is someone you like instantly because you see her confront her husband about sleeping with another woman, and she tells him that if he walks out that door and goes back to see her, then "don't come back." So, she does give him a chance. And he chooses to leave her and his two children. This is a strength and a weakness in Mildred you see again and again throughout the story. She has to speak up, she has to stand up, sometimes out of vanity, sometimes out of love for her children, sometimes out of righteousness, and sometimes out of obsessiveness for things she needs. Bert had squandered their money, and Mildred is close to being totally destitute, but she goes out to find work. Her pride is her biggest hindrance, as she gets several offers and turns them down because she can't stand to think of being a waitress or a maid, or wearing a uniform. Finally she swallows her pride and takes a waitress job, but she hides the details of her job from everyone, embarrassed by what she has stooped to. But Mildred is a fiercely determined person, and before long she has made the best of it and become the best waitress, and makes really good tips, and is savvy about customers, and entrepreneurial, so that when she sees that the restaurant customers are complaining about how lousy the pies are there, she schemes a way to start selling her own pies, and begins to really make money. This theme in the book, Mildred's incredible determination and ingenuity to get what she wants is her greatest strength. But her greatest weakness is her obsessive attraction to people with money and the upper class way of life. It's what attracted her to her husband Bert initially, and what attracts her to Monty (a lazy wealthy man who later brings her down just like Bert), and even her own daughter Veda, who has a holier-than-thou attitude toward anyone who is lower class or who gets their hands dirty. The book really confronts a lot of issues about human strengths and weaknesses, about the attraction to upper class mentality, how it sucks people into a world that is very shallow and egocentric, while the working class which Mildred comes from are the people that rally and help her and support her. Yet, despite the genuineness of the people who help her, Mildred is so drawn toward the people like Bert and Monty and Veda, that she will throw it all away, ruin the very empire she builds through hard work, just to please people who don't even appreciate what she is giving them. Her determination to rise up and be successful, is the same determination that drives her to give everything to her daughter, who takes advantage and threatens to destroy the very things that Mildred worked so hard to create. I won't give away the ending, but this story is remarkably well crafted, with so many human strengths and weaknesses we all see or can identify with. Mildred is a great study of the human spirit and how sometimes the same traits that are our greatest strengths can also be our downfall.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. What a life she lived!

By Kindle Customer Mildred Pierce has always been one of my favorite movies. I never thought to read the book until I saw the movie on TCM movie cable station the person talking about the movie mentioned the book and author, I looked on my kindle and what a very excellent surprise. What a difference I would have loved to see this version of this book, I wonder if they have this version. I read the book every chance I got. The men in her life put Mildred through a lot of stuff in those times. She is one hell of a woman to come full circle in her life with the success then to have her second husband and that WITCH of a daughter of hers. I can not express what I would have done with that little WITCH. I did like what happened in the Mildred Pierce with Joan Crawford than in this book. Veda was a person with no soul and cared for anyone UNLESS there was something in it for her. I would love to shaken her until her teeth rattled so hard they would break in her mouth so she could not smile all smug. You will love this version, it will keep you reading to find out what was not in the movie. I would love the other ending, she needed some kind of suffering for treating her mother that way all the time they were living around each other.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The hand that holds the money cracks the whip.

By Gregory Baird When James Cain's Mildred Pierce was adapted for film, it won Joan Crawford an Academy Award for her role as the titular long-suffering mother. I haven't seen the movie, so I can only surmise that if Mildred Pierces works on screen it is only because it adds a murder mystery into the plot. The novel has no sense of flavor or interest. Mildred was labeled a noir classic when I picked it up, but it completely lacks the trappings of the genre. I can only assume that it has been given the noir label because of the twists added to the movie and because its author, James Cain, is regarded as a master of the noir genre. Instead, Mildred is a character study about an independent woman whose only weakness is enabling her vile daughter. If only it were remotely interesting. The big problem here is that there's only enough material for a short story or, at most, a novella, but Cain insists on stretching the story out into a full novel. A judicious editor would undoubtedly prune large swaths of the plot and no reader would miss them. Cain gets nowhere in a hurry, and frequently goes on at infuriating length with inconsequential details about how Mildred spends her every day. Among other things, we get the minute details of her running a pie business from her home, then the inner workings of the restaurant where she waitresses, and then painfully detailed descriptions of her process opening her own restaurant. Spending pages with Mildred as she debates the cost of chicken, then decides how much to prep in advance of her first service is nothing short of interminable. If I wanted to read about the inner workings of a restaurant I'd revisit Anthony Bourdain's Kitchen Confidential (which is an excellent book, by the way). It would help if the characters were compelling, but Mildred and her awful daughter are not--and aside from a requisite maternal devotion it is exceedingly difficult to see why Mildred prizes awful Veda over her doomed, inconsequential younger child, and it's too bothersome to care or even work up much emotion about what happens to

any of them. Grade: D Check out more reviews on my blog: SupposedlyFun.com

Joan Crawford forged a new and successful screen image in this powerful women's noir film; winning her an Academy Award for best actress. Albert J. LaValley's thorough and insightful guide to *Mildred Pierce* at once tells us much about the making of this complex film, the problems and process of transferring the story to the screen, the specific and important roles of the producer, director, and set designer, and how the film relates to broad trends within the industry. It is without a doubt the most thorough treatment of this important American motion picture.

About the Author Albert J. LaValley, associate professor of film and English at Rutgers University, was, at the time this book was published, visiting associate professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Tino Balio, Professor in the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the author of *United Artists: The Company Built by the Stars*, *United Artists: The Company That Changed the Film Industry*, and the editor of *The American Film Industry* as well as the 22 volume *Wisconsin/Warner Bros. Screenplay* series, all published by the University of Wisconsin Press. He directed the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theatre Research from 1966 to 1982.