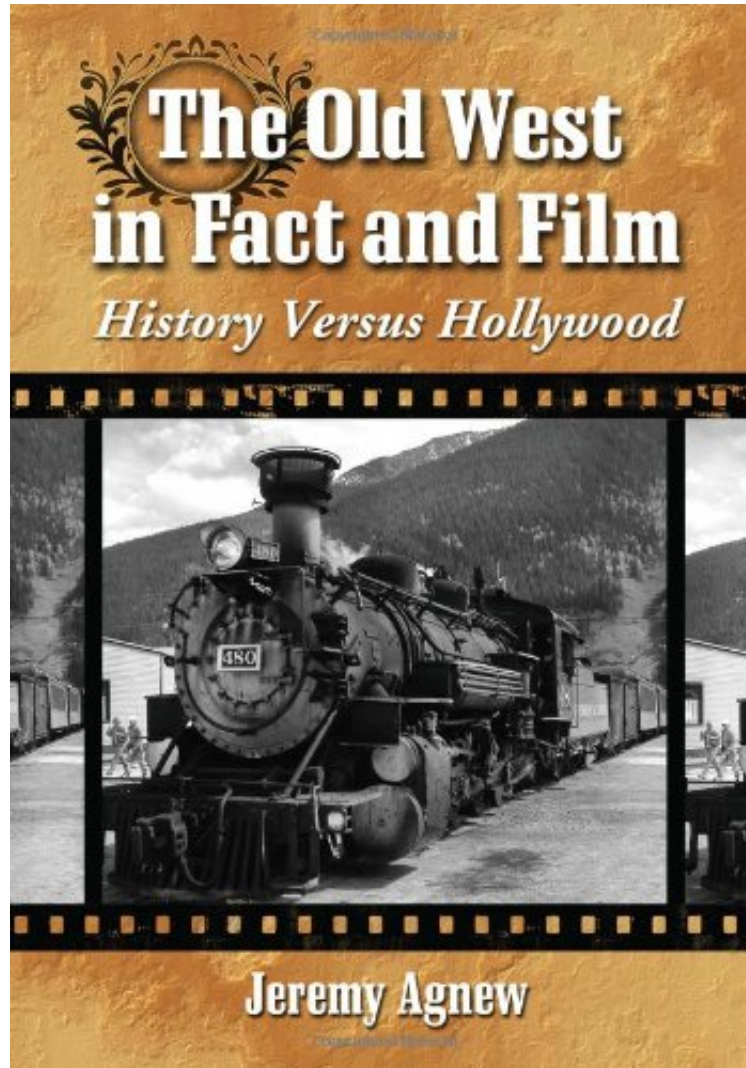


## The Old West in Fact and Film: History Versus Hollywood

Jeremy Agnew

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**Jeremy Agnew : The Old West in Fact and Film: History Versus Hollywood** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Old West in Fact and Film: History Versus Hollywood*:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Comparing the 'Real' Versus the 'Reel' West! By Mike O'Connor In most respects, people's knowledge of the Old West consists of memories created by Western movies. For decades, the Western was a box-office staple and helped to create an image of the old West that was appealing and compelling. But was that image accurate? In *THE OLD WEST IN FACT AND FILM, HISTORY VERSUS HOLLYWOOD*, author Jeremy Agnew examines and compares the reality versus the silver screen version. After an opening chapter summarizing the old West, Agnew relates the creation and evolution of the Western film. He discusses typical

Western plots, location shooting, stunts, the creation of the B-Western, the rise of Western movie stars such as William S. Hart, Tom Mix, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and John Wayne and the rise and fall of the Western as a silver screen staple. Agnew also looks at what the actors in Westerns wore, what weapons they used in the films, how they lived, how women and Indians were portrayed, etc. and then contrasts that with the reality of life in the Old West. In point of fact, the cinematic West was almost all Hollywood invention. Likewise, he reviews famous Westerners like Hickok, Cody, Kit Carson, Earp, Masterson and Calamity Jane and details how inaccurately they were portrayed on the silver screen. *THE OLD WEST IN FACTS AND FILM* is an eye-opener, no question about it. Yet, if it busts apart most of the old Western movie clichés, it is, nevertheless, an informative, entertaining and affectionate trip down memory lane with cinematic cowboys like Roy, Gene, the Duke, Randy, Pancho, etc. and their real-life counterparts. Movie fans and Wild West enthusiasts alike will enjoy this 2012 McFarland Company release. Recommended. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Looks like the film portrayals of the Old West have been mostly wrong, most of the time. By lyndonbrecht This is one of several books by Agnew, and they all center on the old west, or as here on representations of it. His writing is lively, witty and quite good. It is solidly researched and this man knows his topic well. This is not a history of a film genre, it's more about the variety and accuracy of the many many films set in the American West. He does mention many films and details some of them, There are chapters on the real cowboy era 1865-1890; outfits; firepower (the films are often wrong about the weapons used); holsters; wine, women and song (all one chapter); holsters (apparently films often get these wrong, too); soldiers; and the law. Among the entertaining details. The many films shot in Monument Valley have give the public an inaccurate visual sense of the very varied West; that the holster often used in movies was not invented till the 1920s; that actual gunfights were rare, and that cowboys were really hired labor. I suspect that accuracy of details of holsters is not of general interest, but this is an entertaining read.

For many years, movie audiences have carried on a love affair with the American West, believing Westerns are escapist entertainment of the best kind, harkening back to the days of the frontier. This work compares the reality of the Old West to its portrayal in movies, taking an historical approach to its consideration of the cowboys, Indians, gunmen, lawmen and others who populated the Old West in real life and on the silver screen. Starting with the Westerns of the early 1900s, it follows the evolution in look, style, and content as the films matured from short vignettes of good-versus-bad into modern plots.

About the Author Jeremy Agnew is a consultant in the field of biomedical electronics. He has written numerous books on the Old West.