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# So Your Mama Loves It, But Is It Ready For The Big Time? The 10 Most Common Mistakes Screenwriters Make (And How You Can Avoid Them)



## Synopsis

"Other books have been written on the how-to's of screenwriting. None give the writer such an insider's view on how to trouble-shoot your own script. It's like being given the best toolbox in the business...This book is simply the best single resource on screenwriting available." from the foreword by William Broyles, Jr.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The author of this book, Sheila Gallien, really knows her stuff. Sure, that's obvious from the fact that she was an assistant to esteemed Hollywood screenwriter William "Bill" Broyles, Jr. ("Jarhead," "Castaway," "Apollo 13," "Planet of the Apes," and much more) for several years. True she was also formerly a freelance feature film script reader, an assistant at CAA, and has a degree in Theater Arts. Yet her expertise, gained in the Hollywood trenches, is made even most obvious from the detailed and accurate what to do and what not to do covered in this simple and easy-to-read book. Whether you've been writing (and/or selling) screenplays for decades or days, this book is a must-have for your personal Screenwriting library. Formerly only available in paperback, I was ecstatic to add the Kindle version of the book to my own Kindle Paperwhite, 6" High Resolution Display with Built-in Light, Wi-Fi - Includes Special Offers library. My favorite parts of the book detail: why certain stories work, what it means for a screenwriter to develop their craft (and craft is

essential), the biggest mistake you can make as a screenwriter, and how to decide if your screenplay is ready. That said, her book actually covers every important element of screenwriting from slug lines (scene headings) to structure. It's a primer for the novice and a succinct overview for the trained and education professional. In the words of William Broyles, from the foreword of this book, "This book is simply the best single resource on screenwriting available."

This is one of the best books on screenwriting I have read--and I've read A LOT of them. It's mostly yellow now from highlighting. It's not that I'm seeing a lot of new information--for me, it's the fresh perspective that brings everything else into sharper focus. For instance, "Defining the protagonist sets the stage for the inciting incident." I have never heard them connected that way! And it's explained with clarity and economy. Insights like this that fill the book help generate strong ideas for character and events. Read this book if you want to be more efficient and effective as you develop your story and write. Having confidence that you are going about your work in the right way with the right objectives will inspire any storyteller--screenwriter, novelist, dramatist. This book will give you that confidence. And it's an engaging, easy read. I give it my highest recommendation.

It is so rare to be reinforced in such a positive way about the necessity of work and work and rework. Aside from providing a number of pragmatic, applicable solutions for that specific point when nothing makes sense anymore, this book reminds us to inhabit the process itself, to marvel in its bite-sized miracles and even be proud of it. I came out of it feeling understood and nurtured. A wonderful and unusual feeling in the life of a writer !

I contacted Sheila before she wrote this book for a script consultation, based purely on the résumé she had on her website and her association with the Austin Film Festival. It was far more than I could have expected. She had an in-the-trenches knowledge she brought to bear and helped me realize what was missing in my script. When I found out she had a book, I had to see what she had to say. It was very familiar, but expanded, and it's all any screenwriter needs. She makes no pretenses about her literary expertise, which is refreshing. It's practical information with just the right dose of theory from someone who's worked with an Oscar-nominated scribe, done the meetings, seen the notes, and helped with the rewrites. The key to good storytelling is knowing the right questions to ask of your story. Sheila has done a superb job of distilling the process down to those questions, with useful examples to illustrate her points. I've been reading about screenwriting and storytelling for twenty years now. I've separated the wheat from the chaff, what's proven useful

and what hasn't. Sheila Gallien's book is one of the handful of sources I've kept going back to, and I've been recommending it to new screenwriters as the first book they should purchase on the form for years now. (For those interested, the other sources would be Egri's *Art of Dramatic Writing*, McKee's *Story*—a bit overly complicated but still very much worth it—and Brian McDonald's *Invisible Ink*. Offline, McDonald's *Invisible Ink* blog is simply fantastic, Rossio and Elliot's *Wordplayer.com* website columns, and reading the screenplays of modern classic films. Scripts for older classics are fun to read, but the form is vastly different from modern screenplay format.)

I worked with Shelia a few years ago on my first screenplay. She provided invaluable help punching up that script. I learned things I use to this day in my other writing. That script went on to perform well in several screenplay contests after we worked together and I can't recommend this book or her advice enough.

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