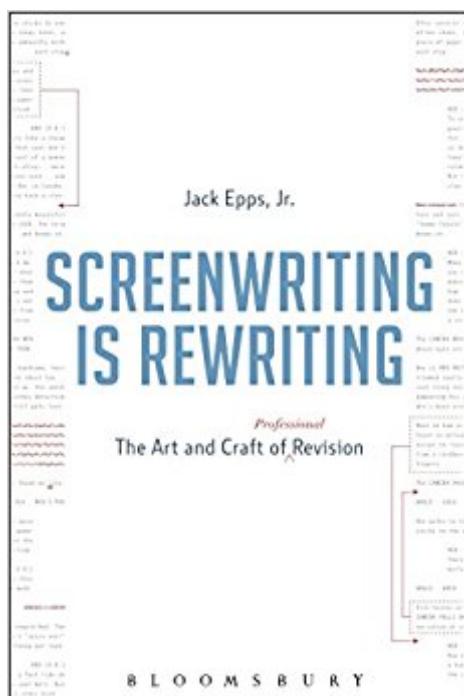


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# Screenwriting Is Rewriting: The Art And Craft Of Professional Revision



## Synopsis

If there is one skill that separates the professional screenwriter from the amateur, it is the ability to rewrite successfully. From Jack Epps, Jr., the screenwriter of *Top Gun*, *Dick Tracy*, and *The Secret of My Success*, comes a comprehensive guide that explores the many layers of rewriting. In *Screenwriting is Rewriting*, Epps provides a practical and tested approach to organizing notes, creating a game plan, and executing a series of focused passes that address the story, character, theme, structure, and plot issues. Included are sample notes, game plans, and beat sheets from Epps' work on films such as *Sister Act* and *Turner and Hooch*. Also featured are exclusive interviews with Academy Award® winning screenwriters Robert Towne (*Chinatown*) and Frank Pierson (*Dog Day Afternoon*), along with Academy Award® nominee Susannah Grant (*Erin Brockovich*).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"And just when we thought we didn't need another book about screenwriting along comes this one, which in short order makes itself a must-have. Jack Epps is a great writer, a master teacher, as smart about character as he is about structure. He's distilled this part of our craft to its essence, and by heeding his book's fine wisdom we will all of us become better rewriters and better writers." - Howard A. Rodman, Screenwriter and President of the Writer's Guild of America, We "Never in the history of Hollywood has a screenwriter heard the words: 'It's perfect; don't change a thing.' Even if someone were to say that, we know better and would change it anyway, and change it again, and again, and again. This book teaches the why and the how of rewriting and is

written by a real, live, honest-to-God professional screenwriter who has successfully had many of his scripts made into movies." - Stephen Sommers, Writer and Director of *The Jungle Book* (1994), *The Mummy* (1999), and *Van Helsing* (2004)"An exemplary text on screenplay writing. Drawing from both his professional and academic experiences, Jack Epps, Jr. provides an excellent distillation of ideal screenwriting practice, creating an indispensable resource for both students and self-taught screenwriters." - David Dunn, Principal Teaching Fellow in Film Studies, University of Southampton, UK

Jack Epps, Jr. is the co-author of the films *Top Gun*, *The Secret of My Success*, *Dick Tracy*, *Legal Eagles*, *Dick Tracy*, and *Turner and Hooch*. As a script doctor, Epps contributed to such films as *Sister Act* and *Die Hard With A Vengeance*. Epps is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Writing for Screen and Television Division in the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California, USA.

This book is written by one of the great screenwriters of our time. And if that were all, then it would already be a great book to learn from. But Jack also has a dozen+ years under his belt as a teacher of the craft, and running the USC screenwriting program. Not every screenwriter understands how and why what they do makes their work great. Jack is one of the few who can do AND teach. Much of what a screenwriter learns comes not from writing a screenplay, but rather rewriting it, and rewriting it a dozen times until they finally crack the plot structure, or the character arc, or dialogue, or any of a dozen skills involved in the craft of screenwriting. Jack has taken his experience (and the experiences used by his colleagues) and distilled it into a book that not only captures that process as a whole, but gives the novice bite-sized chapters focused on smaller, manageable rewrites so they can focus on perfecting one skill at a time. (Which in truth, is how we all naturally do this, heÃ¢Âs just jumpstarted the process by giving you a roadmap of each step so you donÃ¢Ât have to figure it out all by yourself.)Ã¢ÂScreenwriting is RewritingÃ¢Â is not just a title, itÃ¢Âs a secret. ItÃ¢Âs where the professional screenwriter is born. If youÃ¢Âve read a book by one of the many second rate screenwriters or non-screenwriters who profess to understand the craft, perhaps itÃ¢Âs time to read one by one of the greats.

I've taken to sampling bits of this book before I dive into the writing day each morning, and I can't tell you how helpful it's been to have everything at the front of my brain as a result. It's a perfect match for the surgical elements of draft-digging, crafted to be dipped into as a handbook as

readily as it is to be read from front to back. In short: it 100% proves Mr. Epps knows what he's talking about in the screenwriting game, and I can't recommend it enough.

This is a great book, but, not for beginners! I've been a screenwriter for years and understand rewrites but this book has shown me the critical depth you must reach to write on a professional level. However, be prepared to learn that there are no "nice tries" in Hollywood and that some of you writers who read this book "may not have the level of understanding to gain the skill needed for the rewrite process of this book to work for you or do you any good." In reading that it is understandable that it takes the wind-out-of-your-sails for sure and unfortunately, the bane of every writer, the eternal question: Am I good enough. Do I have what it takes? Just be forewarned that this book does not hold your hand as Epps talks about 20+ passes to get your script in shape. There is one caveat though, and I learned this decades ago. You can also rewrite a story to the point that you ruin it too.

I am a producer developing a script with a writer who has been writing for many decades. I have benefited from reading around 40 screenplay book. Jack Epps' book contains most of the concepts in those other books, and they are stated succinctly. It is more than a rewrite book. It is also a great recap of all the important principles of screenwriting and film story. I shy away from the term "must read", but I know this book is one I will return to again and again.

I've read many books on screenwriting, but this book is king at managing the rewrite. It is both thorough and practical. It breaks down solutions to various problems from character to plot, subject to theme. And the book includes informative interviews with storytelling luminaries like Robert Towne. It's a bible for every screenwriter.

5 Stars! Bursting with clarity and practicality from an author with proven screenwriting talent. Jack is not only an accomplished screenwriter; he's also a lucid teacher whose enthusiasm and encouragement pervades this terrific book.

I have found this book extremely helpful. Getting prepared to use all the highlighted areas with my current rewrite. It's clear and concise and I am very delighted that I purchased this book. I mostly do not give reviews, but I had to express that all screenwriters should have this book in their toolbox.

Useful and to the point. I recommend to all the writers who find it daunting to approach the task of rewrite~

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