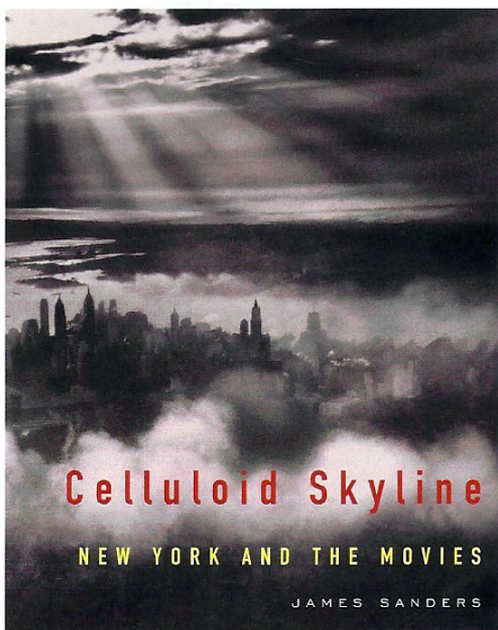




# books

Reviews by Michael Webb

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## Celluloid Skyline

(JAMES SANDERS. KNOPF, \$45 HC) ISBN 0-394-57062-6

Billy Wilder remarked that he preferred Paramount's version of Paris to the real thing, and he might have said the same about New York. In the good old days before television and jumbo jets, most people relied on Hollywood for images of exotic places, and New York always played a starring role as the archetypal big city. The earliest American movies were filmed on New York streets and in skylit lofts, but this documentary view of the city was soon superseded by fanciful portrayals created on the sound stages and back lots of Burbank and Culver City. In this mesmerizing account of cinematic New York, Sanders brings the eye of an architect and the sensibility of a film buff to examine how the city was evoked, in studios and on location, from tenement to penthouse. From *King Kong* and *On the Town*, to the irreconcilable perspectives of Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese, the legacy grows year by year, and we are fortunate to have so generous and perceptive a guide.

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