

Forthcoming November 2007

Hollywood Science

Movies, Science, and the End of the World

Sidney Perkowitz

“Boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy builds girl.”

IN THIS ENTERTAINING book, Sidney Perkowitz discusses the portrayal of science in more than one hundred films, including scientific biographies and documentaries. Beginning with early films like *Voyage to the Moon* and *Metropolis* and concluding with more recent offerings like *The Matrix*, *War of the Worlds*, *A Beautiful Mind*, and *An Inconvenient Truth*, Perkowitz questions how much faith we can put into Hollywood’s depiction of scientists and their work; how accurately these films capture scientific fact and theory; whether cataclysms like our collision with a comet can actually happen; and to what extent these films influence public opinion about science and the future. Movies temporarily remove viewers from the world as they know it and show them the world as it might be, providing special perspective on human nature and society. Yet “Hollywood science” can be erroneous, distorting fact for dramatic effect and stereotyping scientists as remote and nerdy, evil, or noble, and these characterizations do little to improve the relationship between science and society. *Hollywood Science* features dozens of film stills and a list of the all-time best and worst science-fiction movies, offering a winning combination of history, accurate scientific theory, anecdote, and humorous observation.

SIDNEY PERKOWITZ is the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Physics at Emory University. His books include *Empire of Light: A History of Discovery in Science and Art* and *Universal Foam: Exploring the Science of Nature’s Most Mysterious Substance*.

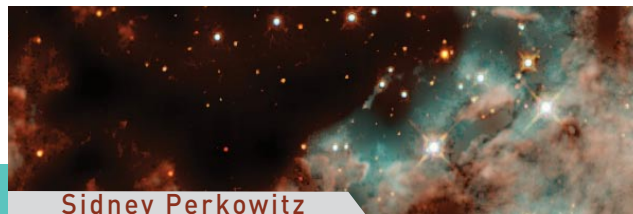
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HOLLYWOOD SCIENCE

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Science, &
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the World*



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