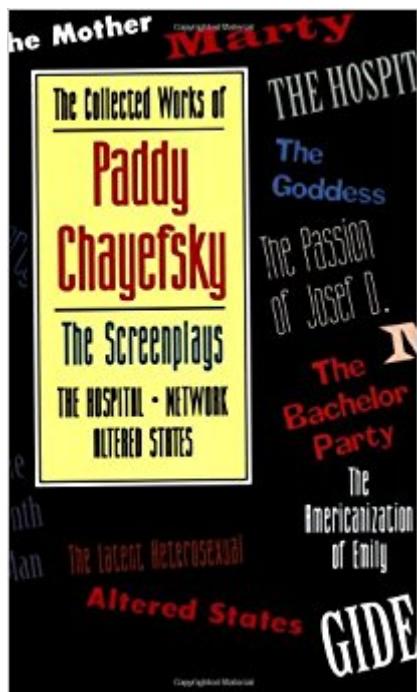


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# The Collected Works Of Paddy Chayefsky: The Screenplays Volume 2



## **Synopsis**

(Applause Books). A collection of screenplays by this brilliant writer. Includes: The Hospital , Network , and Altered States .

## **Book Information**

Series: Collected Works of Paddy Chayefsky

Paperback: 342 pages

Publisher: Applause Theatre & Cinema Books (February 1, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1557831947

ISBN-13: 978-1557831941

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #294,461 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #70 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Television > Reference #91 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Screenplays #167 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Video > Reference

## **Customer Reviews**

Applause Books has done an enormous service in compiling this set of Chayefsky's work, most of which has been long out of print. Two volumes are devoted to his screenplays, including the film classics *Marty* (1955), *The Goddess* (1958), *Network* (1976), and *The Hospital* (1971). The third volume contains his five stage plays, including the powerful *The Passion of Josef D.* (1964) and the final volume of his six television plays. Original casts are listed with each work. And the stage-play volume includes a poignant and informative foreword by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Chayefsky's friend for 22 years. Just to have the film and television versions of *Marty* available for comparison is worth the price of admission for libraries supporting television, film, and drama programs. This set is highly recommended for academic and large public libraries or any library serving a performing arts community. Susan L. Peters, Emory Univ., Atlanta Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I have just finished this particular collection of screenplays, two of which are Academy Award winners and I am knocked out, just completely bowled over by them. I've always been a fan of Chayefsky, ever since I first saw *NETWORK* (included), perhaps his best known film. I hadn't seen *THE HOSPITAL* and caught only part of *ALTERED STATES* on television once. Let me say, they

are every bit as dark and funny and pertinent to today as *NETWORK*. Brief summaries: *NETWORK* is a satire on Network television, the story of a news anchor who goes crazy (or not so crazy) and the ensuing descent of his network as they play to the lowest common denominator for ratings. Through Peter Finch, Chayefsky has bequeathed us the immortal line, "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more." Fans of the film will notice this script contains some extra dialogue and one brief scene, all of which was probably shot, but which the great director Sidney Lumet saw fit to cut. It won the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay in 1976. *THE HOSPITAL* script also won an Academy Award. Here Chayefsky satirizes a bevy of denizens in a large New York hospital complex and the activists of the surrounding neighborhood, making them all complicit in the killing of "God" who checked himself in as a patient. It's a fantastically snarky story, full of dialogue like  
BOCK: What do you say Miss Drummond?  
BARBARA: I expect you can call me Barbara, considering you ravished me three times last night.  
BOCK: Three times?  
BARBARA: Oh, look at him, pretending he didn't count.  
Finally, there is *ALTERED STATES*, perhaps my favorite, which did not win any awards, and is considered somewhat of a failure as a film. Well there's a story behind that. Chayefsky, with his reputation (he also won a screenwriting Oscar for *MARTY*), was able to secure an unheard-of contract for the movie: not a single line could be changed. This is standard in theater, but film is considered a director's medium -- and the director, Ken Russel, was adamant about rewriting. He tried to change a few lines and Chayefsky shut him down. Russel retaliated by trying to film the dialogue in the worst way possible, having it interrupted by other sounds, turned down too low, having actors speak it in weird ways. After reading this script, one will agree this was a tragedy. *ALTERED STATES* is nothing less than Chayefsky's answer to every scientific and religious question. It packs a mind-blowing philosophical punch behind a science fiction story about a psychologist who regresses to a primitive consciousness. It is also completely, touchingly human in the end. There are other volumes of his screenplays, teleplays and stageplays -- all of which I am now desperate to get my hands on and read. For anyone who reads screenplays, this book is an absolute essential. I'm going to keep it in a reverent place on my shelf. Staggeringly good. 5/5 stars!

Excellent!

If you love movies, if you want to write screenplays, how can you not read this collection? Paddy Chayefsky's talent, passion and rage leap off every page. His eye for the absurd is as fresh today as when his scripts were shot. Look at what's on TV today, then read *NETWORK*, written with amazing foresight, 25 years ago.

Probably The Hospital and Network two of the most sophisticated attacks on American institutions ever in film. Dialogue is very natural and sharp, you can overhear hear the actors (Scott, Holden, Finch) as you read, the performances also imbedded. Turned me back to earlier Holden movies and like Pacino afterwards, it was a cliche of a Holden performance to suddenly have enough and go nuts in a mounting rage, sort of the template for all these performances of suppressed fury finally exploding. Very literate on the page, really researched also.

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