

Watch movies. Read scripts. Write pages.

You can learn pretty much everything you need to know about screenwriting by doing these three things:

[Scott Myers](#)

Watch movies.

Read scripts.

Write pages.

Why watch movies?



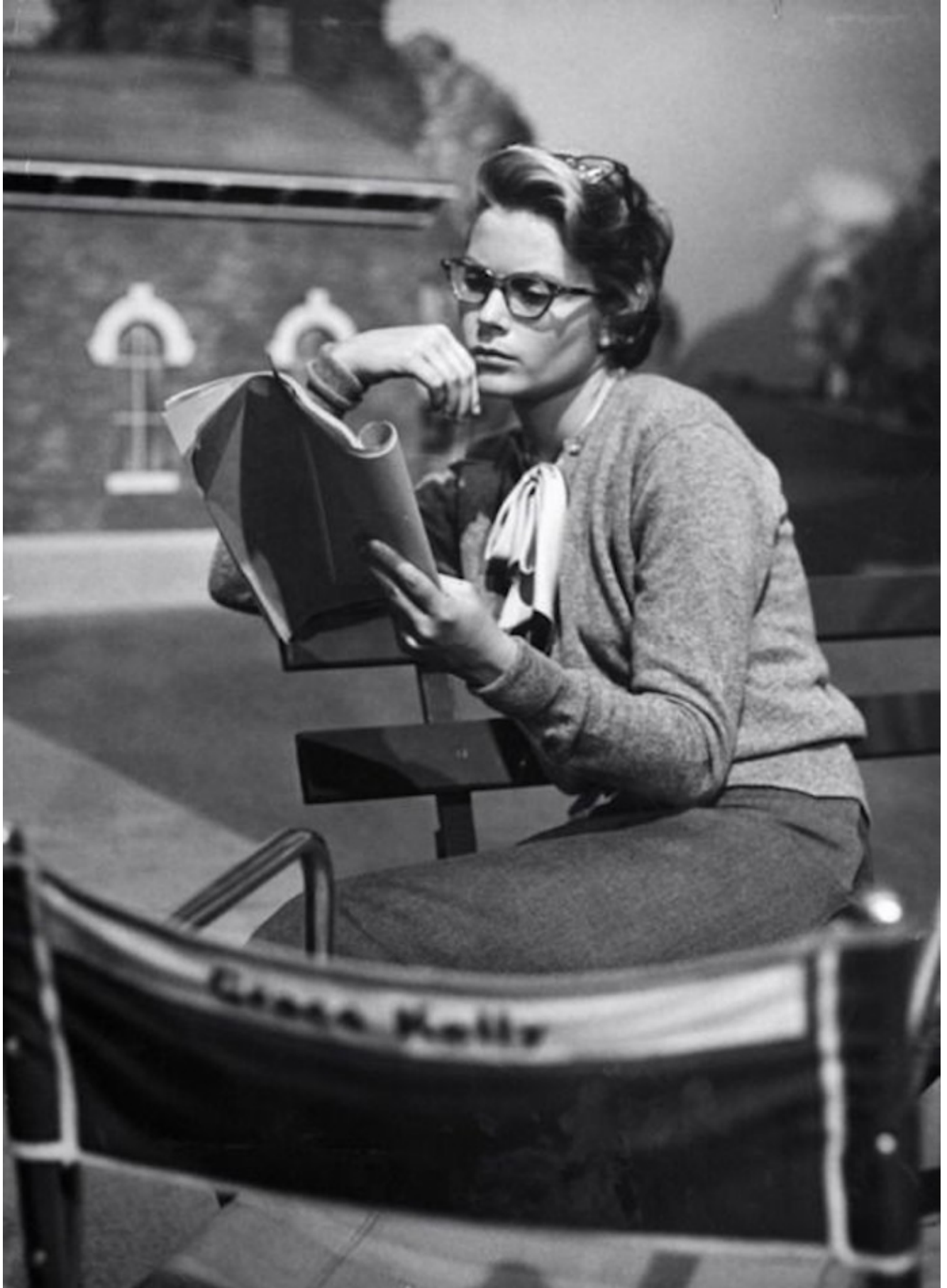
Because to be a good screenwriter, you need to have a broad exposure to the world of film. Every movie you see is a potential reference point for your writing, everything from story concepts you generate to characters you develop to

scenes you construct. Moreover people who work in the movie business constantly reference existing movies when discussing stories you write; it's a shorthand way of getting across what they mean or envision.

But most importantly, you need to watch movies in order to 'get' how movie stories work. If you immerse yourself in the world of film, it's like a Gestalt experience where you begin to grasp intuitively scene composition, story structure, character functions, dialogue and subtext, transitions and pacing, and so on.

Movies must be in your lifeblood — and the best way to do that is to watch them. If you haven't seen all of [AFI's Top 100 Movies](#), now is the time to start.

Why read scripts?



Because every script you read is a learning experience. If it's a good script, you can break it down scene-by-scene to determine why it works. If it's a bad script, you can see aspects of writing you do not want to emulate. By reading

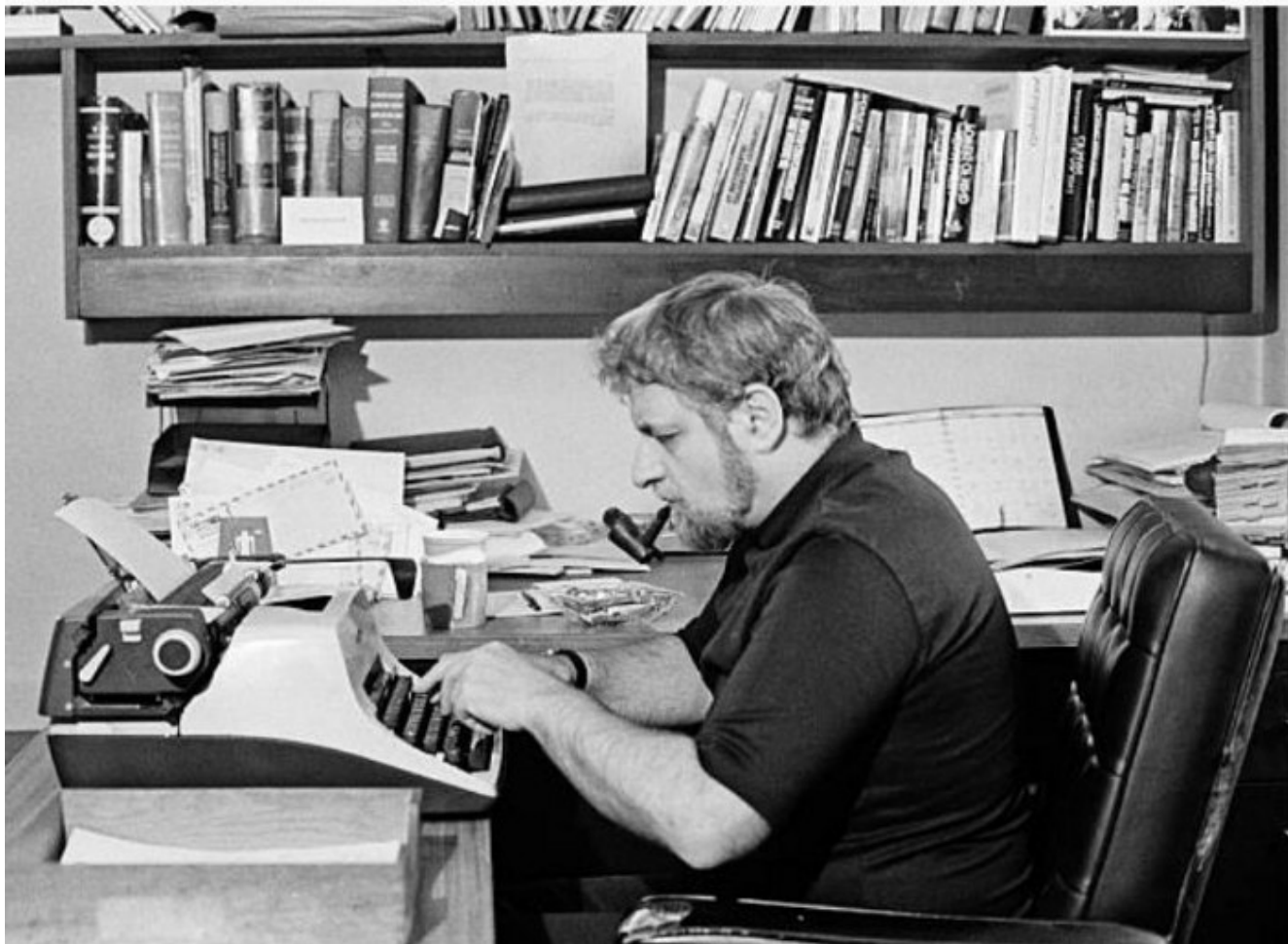
screenplays of great movies, you can see how the pages were translated onto the screen, thereby giving you insight into how to write cinematically.

But most important, you need to read screenplays because these are primary source material, the 'stuff' you traffic when you write. Reading other writers' screenplays is a great way to expose you to different approaches, which will help you inform and define your own unique style, your own distinct voice.

Screenplays are the form through which you tell stories — and the best way learn that form is by reading scripts. If you haven't read the [WGA Top 101 list](#) of screenplays, now is the time to get started.

How to find scripts? My site hosts [100+ links](#) where you can legally download movie scripts. Or try this: Google. Type the name of the script. Screenplay. PDF. It's amazing how many movie scripts are online.

Why write pages?



I don't really have to explain this, right? You know that you have to write to get better as a writer, not just the words you manage to write, but how you approach writing from a psychological, emotional, and spiritual perspective. Nobody is born a writer, we all become writers, it's an active process that is ongoing throughout our lives.

But most important, you need to write to feed your creativity. Putting words onto paper is an act of incarnation. Rewriting and editing your words are acts of shaping the material. Screenwriting is a craft, but you have to be able to tap into your world of 'art' in order to make your pages come alive.

Writing is the process whereby you create stories — and the best way to develop that process is to do it. Every day.

For this, I have no websites to which to point you. No lists with which to challenge you. Just this fact: When you aren't writing, someone else is.

Screenwriting is an incredibly competitive business. There are no short cuts to success. But there are three habits you can embrace that can teach you everything you need to know about the craft, about creativity, and about your writer's self:

Watch movies.

Read scripts.

Write pages.

[Comment Archive](#)