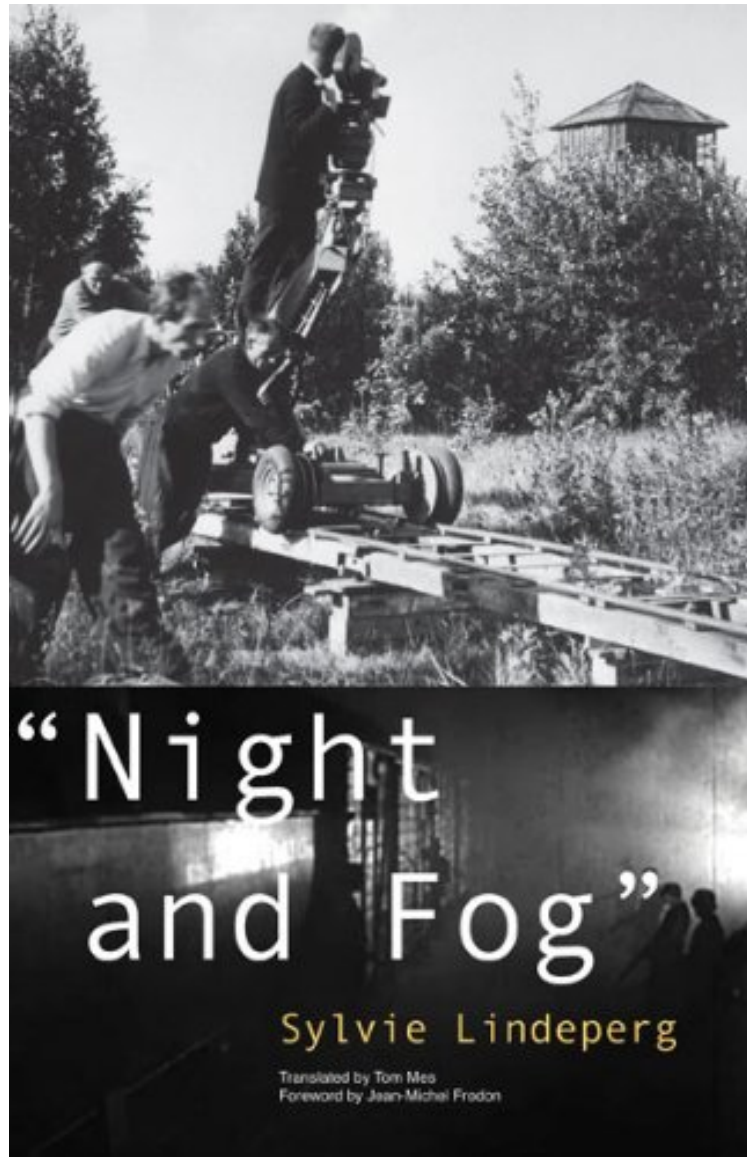


[Free] "Night and Fog": A Film in History (Visible Evidence)

## "Night and Fog": A Film in History (Visible Evidence)

*Sylvie Lindeperg*

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**Sylvie Lindeperg** : "Night and Fog": A Film in History (Visible Evidence) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised "Night and Fog": A Film in History (Visible Evidence):

François Truffaut called Night and Fog the greatest film ever made. But when Alain Resnais finished his documentary, with its depiction of Nazi atrocities, the resistance of the French censors was fierce. A mere decade had passed since

the end of the war, and the French public was unprepared to confront the horrors shown in the filmlet alone the possibility of French complicity. In fact it would be through *Night and Fog* that many viewers first learned, as film critic Serge Daney put it, that the worst had only just taken place. An engrossing account of the genesis, production, and legacy of Resnais's incomparable film, this book documents in extraordinary detail how a film that began as a cinematic spin-off of an educational exhibition on resistance, liberation, and deportation went on to become a significant step in the building of a collective consciousness of the tragedy of World War II. Sylvie Lindeperg frames her investigation with the story of historian Olga Wormser-Migot, who played an integral role in the research and writing of *Night and Fog* and whose slight error on one point gave purchase to the film's detractors and revisionists and Holocaust deniers. Lindeperg follows the travails of Resnais, Wormser-Migot, and their collaborators in a pan-European search for footage, photographs, and other documentation. She uncovers creative use of liberation footage to stand in for daily life of the camps featured to such shocking effect in the film, a finding that raises hotly debated questions about reenactment and witnessing even as it enhances our understanding of the film's provenance and impact. A microhistory of a film that altered the culture it reflected, *Night and Fog* offers a unique interpretation of the interworking of biography, history, politics, and film in one epoch-making cultural moment.