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# THE MOB AND THE MOVIES: A CINEMATIC HISTORY OF THE ALL-AMERICAN CRIMINAL

Andrew Graves

## Week 6: The Cynical 70s, Stripping Justice Bare

### *THE FRENCH CONNECTION* (1971)

#### WILLIAM FRIEDKIN

- Directed by William Friedkin
  - Screenplay by Ernest Tidyman
  - Based on *The French Connection* by Robin Moore
  - Produced by Phillip D'Antoni
  - Cinematography by Owen Roizman
  - Edited by Gerald B. Greenberg
  - Music by Don Ellis
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- Originally snapped up National General Pictures, they eventually dropped it
  - At that point, Richard Zanuck and David Brown picked it up for Fox – intending to make the film for \$1.5 million

“After I saw *Z*, I realized how I could shoot *The French Connection*. Because he shot *Z* like a documentary. It was a fiction film but it was made like it was actually happening. Like the camera didn't know what was gonna happen next. And that is an induced technique. It looks like he happened upon the scene and captured what was going on as you do in a documentary. My first films were documentaries too. So, I understood what he was doing but I never thought you could do that in a feature at that time until I saw *Z*”

**William Friedkin**

#### **Popeye Doyle**

- In the fold of a hardboiled detective
  - Obsessive, deeply flawed
  - Cynical, unlikeable
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- On paper, *The French Connection* (1971) contains many of the elements we have come to expect from a crime thriller
  - Gun fights
  - Car chases
  - The battle between law enforcement and criminality
  - The ‘heist’ or criminal plan
  - The hardboiled detective
  - However, stripped of the visual style of say, Film Noir or clichéd action feature, the documentary style gives the production a stark sense of realism

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**DIRTY HARRY (1971)****DON SIEGEL**

- Directed by Don Siegel
  - Screenplay by Harry Julian Fink, R M Fink and Dean Riesner
  - Produced by Don Siegel
  - Cinematography by Bruce Surtees
  - Edited by Carl Pingitore
  - Music by Lalo Schiffrin
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- Warner Bros initially purchased the script with a view to casting Frank Sinatra in the lead.
  - Irvin Kershner was hired to direct when Sinatra was attached to the title role, but when Sinatra later left the film, Kershner did as well.
  - However, before Sinatra left, John Millius was hired to work on the script

*“In my script version, there's just more outrageous Milius crap where I had the killer in the bus with a flamethrower. I tried to make the guy as outrageous as possible. I had him get a police photographer to take a picture of him with all the kids lined up at the school – he kidnaps them at the school, actually – and they showed the picture to the other police after he's made his demands; he wants a 747 to take him away to a country where he'll be free of police harassment...terrible things like this.”*

**John Millius**

**CLINT EASTWOOD**

- Born in San Francisco on May 31<sup>st</sup> 1930
- Came from a very comfortable background
- He worked a number of jobs including paper carrier, grocery clerk, forest firefighter, and golf caddy
- He tried to enroll at Seattle University but was called up by the US Army
- Though he served in the forces during the Korean War, he actually served out his time as a lifeguard at Fort Ord
- After receiving drama lessons, he began auditioning for film roles

**CHINATOWN (1974)****ROMAN POLANSKI**

- Directed by Roman Polanski
- Written by Robert Towne
- Produced by Robert Evans
- Cinematography by John A Alonzo
- Edited by Sam O'Steen
- Music by Jerry Goldsmith

**ROMAN POLANSKI**

- Born in Paris, 1933 to Polish-Jewish parents
- Moved back to Poland (Krakow) in 1936
- Poland invaded by the Nazis in 1939
- Forced into a ghetto
- Spent the next six years trying to survive the Holocaust