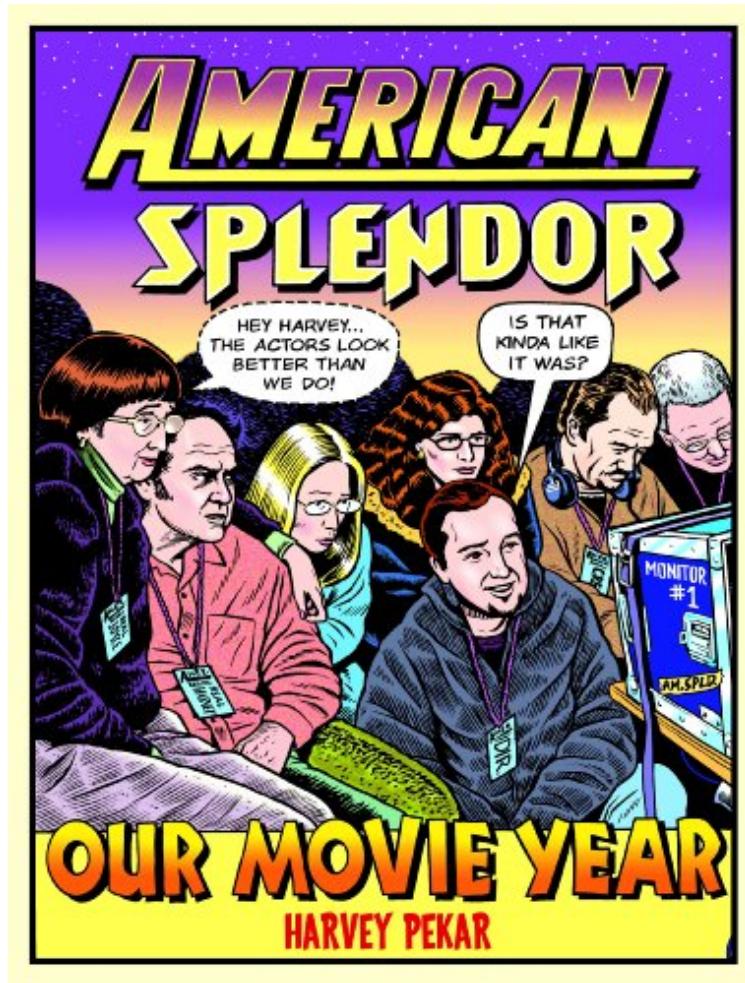


(Mobile book) American Splendor: Our Movie Year

## American Splendor: Our Movie Year

Harvey Pekar  
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**Harvey Pekar : American Splendor: Our Movie Year** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Splendor: Our Movie Year:

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. "I've picked up some extra gigs because of the movie's success, but what happens when that's over?" \*By Kerry WaltersHarvey Pekar is famous for chronicling the everyday, and for helping the rest of us take notice of the fact that the ordinary things of life are really quite wondrous. Even in Our Cancer Year, co-written with his wife Joyce Brabner, Pekar focuses on an event that was harrowing for him personally but (alas!) increasingly ordinary from a statistical perspective: the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. But in Our Movie Year, Pekar seems to break stride by focusing on an event that's truly extraordinary: the release of an award-winning film about his life and work. Here's another extraordinary thing: Pekar writes about this event in the way that his fans have come to know and love. He's obviously pleased that his work has achieved recognition and approval from a wider than usual audience. But what makes the story interesting is that Pekar's pleasure is constantly shadowed by his usual cloud of neuroses: anxiety over whether the film will bring future writing gigs or a nosedive into obscurity once the

box office hoopla ends; money worries; travel anxieties; and up-and-down moods in response to events. The story is a really intriguing psychological portrait of mixed emotions. As one would expect, the book describes in some detail the high-energy events surrounding the film: scrounging up producers and backers; debuts in Cleveland and NYC (the latter threatened by a blackout); the excitement of the Sundance and Cannes festivals; and film-connected travel to England, Ireland, Australia, and Japan. But wonderfully sandwiched in between these story lines are more typical Pekar stories involving misplaced keys, flat tires in winter, and dealing with bureaucrats. The message seems to be that even when extraordinary events occur, everyday life, with its hassles and small victories, continues. There's a curious redundancy in the book. The lead story, the multi-part "The American Splendor Movie," illustrated by Mark Zingarelli, is duplicated later on in "My Movie Year," illustrated by Gary Dumm. The latter is less good than the former, and could easily have been omitted. Toward the end of the book, Pekar offers film and book reviews as well as a few Crumb-like biographies of musicians. And speaking of Crumb: there's a wonderful Crumb-illustrated piece, "Reunion" (p. 55), in which Pekar, using his old pal Crumb as a straight man, pokes fun at his own compulsiveness. It's really brilliant. I don't think that *Our Movie Year* would be a good introduction to Pekar to anyone unfamiliar with his work. But it surely is yet another example of the man's genius. Highly recommended. \_\_\_\_\_ Page 18.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. *It Takes A Worried Man* By Richard C. Geschke Here's an extraordinary story teller working in a media which many consider underground and avant guard who finally gets his 15 minutes. Sadly as we see in this graphic depiction, Harvey Pekar spends most of his "movie year" worrying. As we follow Harvey's insights about the filming of *American Splendor*, we see him truly taking everything in and enjoying the experience. His interplay with the Actors and the Director and Producer brings about all he had hoped and dreamed of when writing the *American Splendor* serial. To Harvey this was the easy fun part of the movie making process which I think he wanted to last forever. It was after the filming that Harvey reverts back to his old worrying self. He worries about the success of the film. He worries about its critical success. He worries about the theaters affected by the East Coast blackout which would force their closure and not show his film. He worries about the excessive travel demands to promote the film. He worries about making enough money. In the end he worries about what will become of him after there is no movie to promote. Lord, fame in Harvey Pekar's mind is indeed a worrying thing. I know Harvey goes into great detail and shows his vast knowledge of the world of jazz and goes into the heritage of the beginnings of Rock and Roll with its birth in Cleveland, but in retrospect Harvey should have looked into a particular folk tune made popular by the Kingston Trio. The tune was entitled "A Worried Man" and to my way of thinking this describes the antics of Harvey Pekar in *American Splendor* *Our Movie Year*. Harvey continues to amaze me. His Cleveland roots and self effacing demeanor makes his stories all so real and good. Great read!! 6 Stars!!! Oh, Ok Harvey, don't worry! 7 Stars!!!! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Good Ol' Harvey Pekar* By Tim Field Somehow this book flew under my radar, but I was fortunate enough to find a used copy for a decent price and I'm glad I did because there are many worthy pages in this collection. *American Splendor: Our Movie Year* is a collection of odd and sods assembled to cash in on the buzz and awareness of Pekar created by the acclaimed film *American Splendor*. There is some repetition of stories and events in the various accountings of Harvey's brush with Hollywood and filmmaking. Most enjoyable for me were the usual slice of life Harvey Pekar stories, his endless worries about finding writing gigs, money worries, and worries about surviving on his pension. I enjoyed Pekar and Gary Dumm's short profiles of various jazz and other types of musicians and Pekar's appreciation of authors like George Ade and Stephen Crane. This is not the best introduction to Harvey Pekar for the general reader and the book fails to list where each story was originally published, but for those who love Pekar and his idiosyncratic ways there are many gems scattered about for them to enjoy. I miss looking forward to new work by Harvey.

From off the streets of Cleveland, the amazing and occasionally regrettable true-life adventures of Harvey Pekar, cineaste. Harvey Pekar is from Cleveland. This much you know. But with the release of *American Splendor*, the indie hit film based on his comic of the same name, the world discovered Harvey in earnest. Once Harvey was content merely to flirt with fame. But when fame wanted a commitment, he found himself a household name. Sort of. And, to tell you the truth, it's starting to bug the hell out of him. An original, incisive graphic novel featuring the talents of R. Crumb, Gary Dumm, Mark Zingarelli, and other artists, *Our Movie Year* chronicles a whirlwind twelve months in the life of Harvey Pekar. It recounts his rise from the filing room at the Cleveland VA hospital to the red carpet at Cannes, Sundance, the Oscars, and beyond; where Harvey won awards, accolades, and the promise of a bigger paycheck. A lot of funny things can happen in a year, and many of them happened to Harvey. And now everyone gets to read about them in *Our Movie Year*.

From Publishers Weekly Fans of Pekar's slice-of-life series *American Splendor* might be worried when they pick up this latest installment. Pekar is known for his everyman persona and his man-of-the-people storytelling style. But can he keep those qualities in the face of an award-winning movie based on his autobiographical comic book series? Happily, the answer is "you bet." Pekar's narrative style, as always, is straightforward. Mostly, he talks to the "camera." Occasionally, he lets readers into his head through halting, uncertain thought balloons (which nicely

reproduce actual thoughts). Some of Pekar's stories are simple reportage, such as an account of his various David Letterman appearances. Others--like his description of locking himself out of his car at the movies--are great character studies. Throughout the stories in this collection, Pekar retains his trademark character: humble, down-to-earth, yet prickly at times. The art, by a crew of well-known independent cartoonists, varies in style--photo-reference realism, 1960s-style underground, computer graphics--but not in quality. All of it gets Pekar right. And some--like Mark Zingarelli's and R. Crumb's--is near perfect. Pekar fans will enjoy this strong collection, and be happy to see Pekar's adventures continuing in Hollywood and beyond. (Dec.) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. The Guardian Guide March 12-18 2005: " ...everyman comics legend Harvey Pekar follows up the positive critical reaction to the American Splendor film with this great collection showing what happens when your life is turned into a film..." Hotdog Magazine, review by Jon Warne: " ...it would be hard not to appreciate this fantastic collection of tales from Pekar's weird world...this graphic novel is both amusing and touching" Word Magazine, March 2005: " ..genuinely funny...the fortunes of the depressive, cancer survivor grip you tightly."