

## Movie Meme

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Taking a clue from [Leslee](#), here's my own take on the Movie Meme...

### Total number of films I own on DVD and video:

Looking at the two bookshelves on either side of the living room TV, I'd say there must be over 200 DVDs right there. This includes perhaps 100 movies from the states, and 50 foreign films including mostly Almodovar and Amenabar films, but there's the odd French film in there too including almost all of the [Audrey Tautou](#) films and an old favorite Betty Blue. The other 50 DVDs are of the educational variety such as the Carl Sagan series [Cosmos](#), the PBS series on String Theory called [The Elegant Universe](#) by Brian Green, a whole bunch of [Nova](#) episodes, the 2001 PBS 6 hour series on [Evolution](#), the 4 hour Ken Burns special on [Lewis and Clark](#), several NASA/Space Travel type shows like [Origins](#), and the [Revolution OS](#) flick which traces the development of Linux and includes curious interviews with Richard Stallman, Bruce Perens, and of course Linus Torvalds. Among the VHS tapes, I still have my very first VHS purchase, Jeremiah Johnson, and my most recent VHS purchase, the Ernest Shackleton 6 part series starring Kenneth Brannigan(?).

### Last film I bought:

Just this week the most recent addition to our DVD collection came in from Amazon... [Northern Exposure, Season 3](#). This television series was a centerpiece to my twenties. The story as a whole further compelled me to travel to Alaska several times, although the filming was done in [Roslyn, Washington](#) outside Seattle where [I had to stop and have a beer in The Brick](#), and I did manage to spend a couple days in Talkeetna, AK where the series was supposedly based on. [Check out my photos](#). Only this past year has the NX series been available on DVD. Previously, while fearing that I would never obtain a video archive of the series, I bought a few key episodes that were available on VHS from independent vendors on Amazon. I paid \$20-45 for individual episodes that I felt were most memorable, including "Northern Lights" from season 1 and "Thanksgiving" from series 3. The most inspiring character to me was Chris Stevens, the self-taught, quasi-hippi/biker from a wrecked home in West Virginia that elevated himself to the Cicelys poet laureate, DJ, lay philosopher. I remember frantically writing down and later researching all the literary fragments that were used by the Chris Stevens role. There was even a book published containing only the musings, quips, and quotes of Chris Stevens, : [Chris in the Morning: Love, Life, and the Whole Karmic Enchilada](#). By season 5 the NX writers were jumping the shark, and as much as I loved the series I could hardly bring myself to watch with the new doctor and all. I missed the final episode Tranquility Base, which ended with the folksy [Our Town](#) by [Iris Dement](#), so I guess it will be a year or so before its available on DVD.

### Last film I watched:

Its not often that I go to the movie theater any more. I recall that my wife and I went to see [The Sea Inside](#) (El Mar al Dentro) with Javier Bardem a few months ago at the Landmark Embassy Theater in Waltham where they specialize in small, independent and foreign films. The quality of film making and acting was superior. A great movie. It was based on a true story of a man in Spain that broke his neck swimming when he was young, and as an old man he petitioned the government for the right to die at his choosing. The story is completely captivating, and I completely forgot that Javier

Bardem really is a young guy playing this old man.

**Five films that I watch a lot or that mean a lot to me (in no particular order):**

Once there's a film that I feel really affects me, really makes me think, or somehow gives me a sense of nostalgia, I try to not watch it again for a very, very long time so that when I finally revisit it I hope to be able to capture some of the intensity of the first viewing. Some of those films include:

- **Dances with Wolves** (and its more anthropological counterpart **Black Robe**). I was introduced to both of these films in the early 90s while taking up a second major of Anthropology during my undergrad. This was when I first started thinking about how to dissociate my learned value system and sense of morality from an objective analysis human behavior and culture. There is no absolute right or wrong across societies, there is only what we are familiar with.
- **Band of Brothers**, the HBO series directed by Stephen Spielberg about World War II. My father was Marine infantry in the Korean war, and this series was a very realistic depiction of that wartime era.
- **Contact**, based on Carl Sagan's book, and **From Earth to the Moon**, the HBO series produced or directed by Tom Hanks chronicling the Apollo missions. These play heavily into my fascination with **space exploration for both the near and far** time spans.
- **Amelie**. Need I say more. The creativity and wit alone make this **a really smart film**, and who can resist the cute and utterly adorable Amelie with her off the collar bob, big brown eyes, and childish grin.
- **Never Cry Wolf**, a Disney film actually, based on the novel by **Farley Mowat** which takes a critical look at the misguided and impotent role of the government with regard to wildlife and natural resource regulations. A biologist finds himself dumped into the middle of the wilderness with a case of light bulbs, a few dozen cases of moose juice (beer), a typewriter, and a saxophone... all requisite items assigned to his care by the government agencies in Ottawa. His objective is to ascertain the cause of the diminishing caribou population of Canada and with preordained bias that wolves are to blame, although he comes to discover the truth and himself.

**I hereby propagate this meme in the direction of...**

Anyone who wants it! I won't put anyone on the spot, but please feel free to pick this up if it appeals to you.