The Philosophy of Film Noir

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FOREWORD

In the fall of 1976, when I wrote the essay "The Phi-
tifs in the Film Noir" for Sight and Sound, I would have expected that some time would elapse before scholars would take an interest in the subject. The reader would be under the title The Philosophy of Film Noir, here it is, a welcome indication of public awareness and scholarly respect. Film noir was little known beyond a cult following and derided by some as a specious genre and not worthy of serious critical attention. Film noir seems to be settled in its place, and the controversies surrounding the field of film noir seem to be settled in its place, and the appendices in Film Noir: An Encyclopedia (ed. Alain Silver and Robert A. Porfirio, Alain Silver, and James M. Sibley; New York: Limelight, 1999), and Film Noir Reader 4 (Alain Silver, Robert A. Porfirio, Alain Silver, and James M. Sibley; New York: Limelight, 2001), which, taken together, provide a somewhat simplistic effort to extract the essence of the outlook on life that these divines manifested toward existence that was akin to a maelstrom evolved in postwar France. Perhaps, myself a bit here, I would like to take credit for other critics following in their wake.