

Short movie summaries  
of the 101 most important movies described in  
**ReAction! Chemistry in the Movies**

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Chapter 1: The Dramatic Jekyll and Hyde Adaptations

*Mary Reilly* (1996) Devoted housemaid Mary Reilly (Julia Roberts) is capable of loving the retiring Dr. Henry Jekyll and the evil Mr. Edward Hyde (both by John Malkovich).

*Dr. Black, Mr. Hyde* (1976) Medical researcher and physician Dr. Henry Pride (Bernie Casey) self-experiments with a liver regeneration serum that he and Dr. Billie Worth (Rosalind Cash) created.

*I, Monster* (1971) Psychoanalyst Dr. Charles Marlowe (Christopher Lee) self-experiments with a drug that suppresses a person's dominant psychological drive.

*Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (1971) Physician Dr. Henry Jekyll (Ralph Bates) discovers that the "elixir of life" is the "female hormone" that transforms him into Mrs. Hyde (Martine Bestwick)

*The Two Faces of Dr. Jekyll* (1960) Physician Dr. Henry Jekyll (Paul Massie) develops a drug to separate man's two personalities.

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1941) Physician Dr. Henry Jekyll (Spencer Tracy) develops a drug to separate man's two personalities.

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931) Physician Dr. Henry Jekyll (Fredric March) develops a drug to separate man's two personalities.

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1920) Physician Dr. Henry Jekyll (John Barrymore) develops a drug to separate man's two personalities.

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1912) Physician Dr. Henry Jekyll (James Cruze) develops a drug to separate man's two personalities.

Chapter 2: Chemical Invisibility Movies

*Hollow Man* (2000) Dr. Sebastian Caine (Kevin Bacon) develops a human invisibility compound and convinces his colleagues to test its effect on him.

*Now You See Him, Now You Don't* (1972) Undergraduate Dexter Riley (Kurt Russell) invents invisibility spray and uses it to save Medfield College from developer Mr. Arno (Cesar Romero).

*The Invisible Agent* (1942) Frank Raymond (Jon Hall) uses his grandfather's invisibility formula to outwit the Nazis.

*The Invisible Woman* (1940) Kitty Carroll (Virginia Bruce) uses Professor Gibbs's (John Barrymore) invisibility process to revenge herself against her boss Mr. Growley (Charles Lane).

*The Invisible Man Returns* (1940) Frank Griffin (John Sutton), Jack's brother, helps his partner Geoffrey Radcliffe (Vincent Price) escape a death sentence and works on the duocaine reversion formula.

*The Invisible Man* (1933) Assistant food preservation chemist Jack Griffin (Claude Rains) takes monocaine invisibility formula, can't reverse invisibility, goes insane, and kills people.

*The Invisible Thief* (1909) A young thief uses the recipe in Wells's novel to prepare an invisibility formula.

### Chapter 3: Movies about War, Sabotage, Terrorism, and Chemistry

*United 93* (2006) Hypothetical reconstruction of the hijacking of United Airlines flight 93 on September 11, 2001.

*The Quiet American* (2002) London *Times* reporter Thomas Fowler (Michael Caine) vies with American undercover agent Alden Pyle (Brendan Fraser) for Phuong's (Do Thi Hai Yen) affection in 1950s Vietnam.

*Spider-Man* (2002) Military Industrialist Norman Osborn (Willem Dafoe) takes untested performance enhancement drug and becomes the Green Goblin.

*The Sum of All Fears* (2002) The source of a terrorist nuclear bomb is discovered by isotope analysis.

*The Rock* (1996) Rogue marine commandos threaten to use VX gas missiles against San Francisco.

*Fat Man and Little Boy* (1989) General Leslie Groves (Paul Newman) persuades physicist Robert Oppenheimer (Dwight Schulz) to begin and then to complete the Manhattan Project.

*Die Hard* (1988) New York Policeman John McClane (Bruce Willis) single-handedly thwarts a group of terrorists in Los Angeles using his wits and their C-4 plastic explosives.

*Bell Diamond* (1986) Vietnam veteran Jeff (Marshall Gaddis) suffers emotionally after the war, possibly from Agent Orange exposure.

*Scanners* (1981) ConSec Corporation has created people with telekinetic and telepathic powers, including one who intends to dominate the world and another who intends to stop him.

*The Molly Maguires* (1970) A group of Irish coal miners calling themselves the Molly Maguires sabotage and terrorize the Pennsylvania coal company that employs them.

*Dr. Strangelove; or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964) General Jack D. Ripper (Sterling Hayden) acts on his belief that public water fluoridation is proof the communists have already begun to take control of the United States.

*The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957) Scott Carey (Grant Williams) shrinks after exposure to an insecticide and gamma radiation.

*Miracle in Harlem* (1948) Who swindled Aunt Hattie (Hilda Offley) out of her candy making business, and then killed two men?

*Sabotage Agent* (aka *Adventures of Tartu*) (1943) Captain Terence Stevenson (Robert Donat) goes undercover as Jan Tartu to destroy a German poison gas factory located in Czechoslovakia.

*The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1933) Berlin Police Inspector Karl Lohmann (Otto Wernicke) traces crimes to mastermind Dr. Mabuse (Rudolf Klein-Rogge), who is locked in an asylum.

### Chapter 4: Movies About Bad Chemical Companies

*The Constant Gardener* (2005) After activist Tessa Quayle (Rachel Weisz) is murdered in Kenya, diplomat husband Justin (Ralph Fiennes) searches for the reason.

*Bhopal Express* (2001) Events on the night of the 1984 Union Carbide factory explosion that released methyl isocyanate and hydrogen cyanide gases into the city of Bhopal, India.

*Erin Brockovich* (2000) Amateur lawyer Erin Brockovich (Julia Roberts) develops chromium case against Pacific Gas & Electric and wins.

*Kids in the Hall: Brain Candy* (1996) Roritor Pharmaceutical chemist Chris Connor (Kevin McDonald) develops antidepressant Gleemonex and company releases it before sufficient testing.

*Safe* (1995) Carol White (Julianne Moore) acquires multiple chemical sensitivity

*I Love Trouble* (1994) Rival news reporters Peter Brackett (Nick Nolte) and Sabrina Peterson (Julia Roberts) compete for a story about a corrupt chemical company producing a carcinogen.

*Silkwood* (1983) Biography of whistleblower Karen Silkwood (Meryl Streep) set in 1974, the year that she died or was killed on her way to meet a journalist about workplace safety violations.

*The Incredible Shrinking Woman* (1981) Suburban housewife Pat Kramer (Lily Tomlin) starts shrinking after exposure to a mixture of “Sexpot” perfume and a new detergent.

*One Man* (1977) TV news reporter Jason Brady (Len Cariou) investigates Konrads Ltd., which is making deadly biacetylplumbane (BAP).

*Soylent Green* (1973) Ecodisaster dystopia about New York City Police Detective Robert Thorn (Charlton Heston), who investigates the murder of Soylent Corporation director William R. Simonson (Joseph Cotten).

*Riders of the Whistling Pines* (1949) Gene Autry (Gene Autry) supervises DDT spraying to prevent tussock moth forest infestation and then stockmen blame him for animal deaths.

#### Chapter 5: Movies Emphasizing Chemical Aspects of Addictive Drugs

*Thank You for Smoking* (2005) Academy of Tobacco Studies Vice President Nick Naylor (Aaron Eckhart) spins support for cigarette smoking.

*The Salton Sea* (2002) Tom Van Allen (Val Kilmer) enters the meth world as Danny Parker seeking revenge against the masked men who killed his innocent wife.

*Formula 51* (2001) Los Angeles bootleg chemist Elmo McElroy (Samuel L. Jackson) heads to Liverpool to sell his latest product, the most powerful drug ever created.

*Trainspotting* (1995) Mark Renton (Ewan McGregor) is an Edinburgh heroin addict whose parents force him to quit; after the misery of withdrawal is over, he leaves for London to get away from junkie friends but they find him anyway.

*Altered States* (1980) Consciousness researcher Eddie Jessup (William Hurt) engages in self-experimentation with hallucinogens and a sensory deprivation tank.

*All That Jazz* (1979) Joe Gideon (Roy Scheider) pops pep pills to maintain his creative flow until he meets the angel of death.

*THX-1138* (1970) LUH 3417 (Maggie McOmie) disrupts THX 1138's (Robert Duvall) depressant SP5 intake.

*Easy Rider* (1969) Wyatt (Peter Fonda) and Billy (Dennis Hopper) score big on a drug deal and then travel from Los Angeles to New Orleans in search of America, picking up George Hanson (Jack Nicholson) along the way.

*The Valley of the Dolls* (1967) Three young women enter different parts of show business, begin using drugs, rise to the top, and then fall.

*The Trip* (1967) Television advertisement director Paul Groves (Peter Fonda) is divorcing wife Sally (Susan Strasberg) so he takes LSD to get in touch with his feelings.

*Seconds* (1966) Investment Banker Arthur Hamilton (John Randolph) is transformed into painter Tony Wilson (Rock Hudson), who finally learns what life is all about but then drinks too much.

#### Chapter 6: Inventor Chemist Movies

*Who Killed the Electric Car?* (2006) In this documentary, Stan and Iris Ovshinsky's nickel metal hydride battery is the only suspect not guilty of killing the electric car.

*Flubber* (1997) Professor Phillip Brainard (Robin Williams) creates a flying rubber called flubber.

*Romy and Michele's High School Reunion* (1995) Romy White (Mira Sorvino) and Michele Weinberger (Lisa Kudrow) claim to have invented Post-it Notes.

*Back to the Future* (1985) At 1:20 a.m. on Saturday, October 26, 1985, Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) travels back 30 years in Dr. Emmett L. Brown's (Christopher Lloyd) plutonium-powered DeLorean DMC-12 automobile time machine.

*Caprice* (1966) Double agent Patricia Fowler's (Doris Day) search for the water-repellent hairspray formula leads her to inventor Madame Piasco (Lilia Scala).

*Lover Come Back* (1961) Dr. Linus Tyler (Jack Kruschen) develops the alcoholic mint named VIP while advertising executives Carol Templeton (Doris Day) and Jerry Webster (Rock Hudson) compete for new accounts while engaging in a battle of the sexes.

*The Absent-Minded Professor* (1961) Professor Ned Brainard (Fred MacMurray) creates a flying rubber called flubber.

*The Man in the White Suit* (1951) Chemist Sidney Stratton (Alec Guinness) develops a fabric that can't be stained, get dirty, or wear out.

*Yellow Cab Man* (1950) Accident-prone Augustus "Red" Purdy (Red Skelton) invents an unbreakable elastic glass.

*Edison, the Man* (1940) Biography of Thomas Edison (Spencer Tracy) that builds up to the invention of the light bulb.

*Beauty for the Asking* (1939) After Jean Russell (Lucille Ball) loses her boyfriend and job, she decides to market the face cream she invented.

*Mr. Edison at Work in His Chemical Laboratory* (1897) The camera is fixed in one position as Thomas Edison moves from one side of the screen to the other in this 20-second reality short. He weighs something, adds it to a flask, and pours the solution into another flask.

#### Chapter 7: Chemical Detection Movies

*The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (2003) Characters from late Victorian fiction unite to defeat the evil Fantom in 1899; the former nurse Mrs. Harker (Peta Wilson) uses inorganic qualitative analysis to identify the traitor.

*Merci pour le Chocolat* (2000) Jeanne Pollet's (Anna Mouglais) quest for her parentage uncovers murder and the date rape drug Rohypnol.

*The Bone Collector* (1999) Quadriplegic New York City police detective and true crime book author Lincoln Rhyme (Denzel Washington) leads the investigation against a serial killer who leaves clues about the next murder site.

*Backdraft* (1991) Arson detectives Donald "Shadow" Rimgale (Robert DeNiro) and Brian McCaffrey (William Baldwin) investigate a series of arson/murders involving magnesium and a liquid called trychlichlorate.

- Batman* (1989) Thug Jack Napier (Jack Nicholson) is disfigured in a vat of chemicals, so he uses cosmetics to cover his face; he creates a poison named Smile that forms when certain personal care products are mixed.
- The Name of the Rose* (1986) Brother William of Baskerville (Sean Connery) investigates mysterious deaths in a Benedictine abbey while the monks are convinced the apocalypse is coming.
- Moonraker* (1979) Industrialist Hugo Drax (Michael Lonsdale) alters a South American orchid to produce a hypertoxic molecule.
- The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* (1976) Dr. John Watson (Robert Duvall) tricks Sherlock Holmes (Nicol Williamson) into meeting with Sigmund Freud (Alan Arkin) in Vienna to confront his cocaine addiction.
- The Andromeda Strain* (1971) A small team of experts determines the biology and chemistry of deadly alien material; elemental analysis determines the composition of its two parts.
- Our Man Flint* (1966) Chemical analysis of a deadly poison dart shows traces of ingredients for bouillabaisse, so Derek Flint (James Coburn) searches for the perpetrator in the restaurants of Marseilles.
- D.O.A.* (1949) Accountant Frank Bigelow (Edmond O'Brien) has been poisoned with a deadly dose of luminous toxin; he has only a short time to find out why because there is no antidote.
- Kid Glove Killer* (1942) Police chemists Jane Mitchell (Marsha Hunt) and Gordon McKay (Van Heflin) use a spectrograph to discover traces of vanadium in a bomb's gunpowder residue.
- The Exploits of Elaine* (1914) Elaine Dodge (Pearl White) and Craig Kennedy (Arnold Daly) fight the Clutching Hand, who killed Elaine's father.

#### Chapter 8: Classroom Chemistry Movies

- The Prince and Me* (2004) University of Wisconsin premedical student Paige Morgan (Julia Stiles) meets undercover Danish Prince Edvard (Luke Mably) and falls in love.
- Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002) Someone has petrified muggle-born students and the cat Mrs. Norris; mandrake root juice restores them.
- Tortilla Soup* (2001) Martin Naranjo (Hector Elizondo) is retired master chef who prepares magnificent weekend meals for his three grown daughters, one of whom is chemistry teacher Leticia (Elizabeth Peña).
- October Sky* (1999) Homer Hickman (Jake Gyllenhaal) develops rocket fuels after learning about *Sputnik*; based on a true story.
- The Saint* (1997) Simon Templar (Val Kilmer) is hired to steal a cold fusion formula from Oxford University electrochemist Dr. Emma Russell (Elisabeth Shue) but then falls in love with her.
- The Nutty Professor* (1996) Overweight genetics professor Sherman Klump (Eddie Murphy) creates a quinone compound that transforms him into thin, aggressive Buddy Love; Klump takes it because he's in love with chemistry professor Carla Purty (Jada Pinkett Smith).
- The Nutty Professor* (1963) Nerdy Arizona State Chemistry Professor Julius Kelp (Jerry Lewis) creates an elixir that transforms him into chauvinist swinger Buddy Love.

*The Affairs of Dobie Gillis* (1953) Pansy Hammer (Debbie Reynolds) and Dobie Gillis (Bobby Van) attend Grainbelt University; she loves to mix chemicals together until they cause an explosion.

*It Happens Every Spring* (1949) Chemistry Professor Vernon Simpson (Ray Milland) discovers a nitrocyclohexane compound that causes objects to avoid wood, and then uses it to become a major league pitcher.

*Madame Curie* (1943) Biography of Marie Sklodowska Curie (Greer Garson), who discovered radium with the help of her husband Pierre (Walter Pidgeon).

*The Chemist* (1936) Duncemore College chemistry student Elmer Triple (Buster Keaton) invents four things, including a noiseless explosive.

### Chapter 9: Research Chemists Solving Problems in the Movies

*Me & Isaac Newton* (1999) Documentary asks seven scientists, including Nobel prize-winning pharmaceutical chemist Gertrude Elion, why they do what they do.

*Medicine Man* (1992) Ethnobotanist Robert Campbell (Sean Connery) and biochemist Rae Crane (Lorraine Bracco) use a gas chromatograph to find a cancer-fighting drug in the Amazon forest.

*Lorenzo's Oil* (1992) When Lorenzo Odone (Zack O'Malley) develops a strange disease at age 7, his parents Michaela and Augusto (Susan Sarandon and Nick Nolte) learn everything they can about it and then develop a dietary cure that slows the disease; based on a true story.

*The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1988) Ethnobiologist Dr. Dennis Alan (Bill Pullman) searches for the molecule that causes zombinism in Haiti.

*Clambake* (1967) Petroleum chemist Scott Heyward (Elvis Presley) creates a superhard, super-fast-drying varnish that allows him to win the boat race, the heart of the girl he loves (Shelley Fabares), and his father's respect (James Gregory).

*Forever, Darling* (1956) Susan Vega's (Lucille Ball) guardian angel (James Mason) convinces her to join her husband Lorenzo (Dezi Arnaz) on his insecticide 383 field test to save her marriage.

*Monkey Business* (1952) Chemist Barnaby Fulton (Cary Grant) self-experiments with a youth formula he created.

*Strange Impersonation* (1946) Pharmaceutical chemist Nora Goodrich (Brenda Marshall) develops new anesthetic, self-experiments, and then her life goes *noir*.

*The Great Moment* (1944) Bemused biography of Boston dentist William T. G. Morgan (Joel McCrea), who discovered the first anesthetic—sulfuric ether.

*Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet* (1940) Biography of Paul Ehrlich (Edward G. Robinson), who discovered a chemical cure for syphilis and gave birth to modern drug discovery.

*The Love Test* (1935) When Mary Lee (Judy Gunn) becomes chief chemist, the other chemists scheme to make her fall in love so she will neglect her job and fail.

*The Schemers* (1922) Research chemist Paul Jackson (G. Edward Brown) develops gasoline substitute, is kidnapped, and then thwarts criminals with the help of his girlfriend Isobel Benton (Edna Morton).