

# Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream by Hunter S. Thompson

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Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream was originally written by Hunter S. Thompson in 1971. This classic novel showcases a stoned sportswriter, Raoul Duke, who also refers to his own ego as "Dr. Gonzo". Duke travels to Las Vegas with his fellow Samoan "attorney" to cover a motorcycle race on the outskirts of Las Vegas called the Mint 400. After a series of reckless events, Raoul and his companion finally make their way to the city. Once there, they find themselves stirring up a great deal of trouble and receive a heap of public attention due to their erratic, drug-induced behaviors. The novel intrigued readers so much that, in 1998, Terry Gilliam transformed Thompson's work of art into a movie under the same title. Although the film adaptation of the narrative shares mostly similarities with the original novel, Gilliam's [Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas](#) uses a slightly different type of narration, omits a selection of topics, and lacks emphasis on the American Dream compared to Thompson's original. The first and most apparent discrepancy in the two works is that they are under two separate styles of narration. While the characters in both speak in the first person, in the movie, Dr. Gonzo recites Duke's thoughts as if he is the narrator. Conversely, the book

randomly changes back and forth between Dr. Gonzo and [Raoul Duke](#)'s lines. On some occasions, this makes it complicated for the reader to understand the difference between what is actually happening and what is only being contemplated on. This, in turn, could puzzle the reader. However, some of the misunderstanding that takes place does seem to make the characters' drug-induced actions much more pragmatic and reiterates just how dis...

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...the "minor details" in his work and because his own thoughts and ideas about society and the American Dream were incorporated into the storyline. Gilliam's version of Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, however, leaves out a few of the important topics that were frequently mentioned, lacks emphasis on Hunter's view of the American Dream, and changes the style of narration entirely. For these reasons, Hunter Thompson's original version of the narrative is a much more informative based on the amount of details that it provides compared to Terry Gilliam's film.

#### Works Cited

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream. Dir. Terry Gilliam. Perf. Johnny Depp and Benicio del Toro. 1998. DVD.  
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