

Title	You Only Live Once
Director	Fritz Lang
Date	1937
Area	Epistemology
Theme	Empiricism
Plot Summary	<p>Circumstances cause ex-con Eddie Taylor (Henry Fonda) to be put on trial for bank robbery. The film repeatedly raises questions concerning sight and the failure to see, undermining the straightforward idea that 'seeing is believing'. At several points the audience is led into making a mistake of perceptual judgement, after which a wider context is revealed and the judgement is shown to be mistaken. For example, a newspaper in close-up with the headline 'Taylor Freed' suggests Eddie has been found innocent until it is revealed to be only one of three possible front pages that have been prepared prior to the outcome of his trial: 'Taylor Freed'; 'Deadlocked'; 'Guilty' that have been prepared. By making us reconsider what we think we know in this way, Lang puts a more general question mark over whether Eddie is indeed innocent or guilty of the robbery, and warn against any easy answer to this by reference to 'what we can see before us'. Indeed on close inspection, what we see of the actual robbery, as it is presented to us in the film, do not resolve the issue one way or the other</p>
Key Scenes	
Relevant Text	George Wilson, Narration in Light: Studies in Cinematic Point of View, 1986, 18-19.