Perhaps more than any other major American city in the 1970s, New York represented the decline of an urban existence. Job loss from factors related to deindustrialization and intense crime occupied local and national news, reflecting the increasing anxiety of America’s future. New York City was positioned at the center of this frightening chaos. Films made during this period, known by film scholars and journalists as the “New Hollywood” captured the collective temperament of the people and the physical space they inhabit during its disintegration. The depiction of New York during the 1970s has been widely discussed in the writing on two key New York City directors, Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese. Scholars like Ellis Cashmore and Charles Silet have argued about Allen and Scorsese’s depiction of New York respectively, however, they have not adequately offered a fully comprehensive study of their works collected together in order to uncover New York’s decline. Specifically, this Thesis, examines the films made by Allen and Scorsese during the 1970s, specifically, Annie Hall, Manhattan, Mean Streets, and Taxi Driver. I explore the disparities and philosophies that both auteurs express in their depiction of the same urban space. Although the films are not documentaries, they do however; offer a faithful portrayal of a city in transition. By closely examining their works together, I offer a new perspective of New York’s culturally diverse population transforming from a working class industrial landscape to one influenced by the principles of Neoliberalism.
In his famous 1954 essay "A Certain Tendency in French Cinema," published in Cahiers du cinéma five years before the release of his first feature, François Truffaut proposed the revolutionary notion that the director is the true author of a given film, an idea that has thoroughly permeated film culture by this point. Today, to mark what would have been Truffaut's eighty-second birthday, we're posting the following clip of the filmmaker describing auteur theory to New York Film Festival director Richard Roud in October 1977, from a conversation that aired on the New York arts program Camera Thr... Who better to explain what an auteur of the cinema is than one of the originators of auteur theory?