

Hollywood Renaissance/New Hollywood Cinema 1960s-1977(ish) Chapter 14 and into 16

As our F2700 history has shown in the past weeks, Italian and French cinemas changed significantly in the post war years, moving beyond the studio products that had dominated international markets for decades. INR and FNW pushed cinematic storytelling and stylistics in fresh directions that marked a change from the studio products of the pre-war years (in Italy) and that lingered in post-war France for a few years post-WWII. You should reference those earlier notes to see what these filmmakers sought to change about film.

In the US, studio films had done so well financially (for 4 decades) that the studios saw little reason to change the stories or styles of their films, failing to recognize that the audience in the 1960s was significantly different than that of previous decades. 1946 was the peak year of box office receipts in Hollywood (you should certainly check out this section in the book); and, as revenue declined through the 1950s, studios took until the late 1960s to realize how stale they had become to a new audience that was more educated, tended to be wealthier, diverse, and more demanding than the previous generation. And, they were “trained” on TV.

Influences on late 1960s-1975

1. TV made it into American homes en masse in the 1950s and took audiences away from theaters
 - a. They stayed at home--Do you know [this related history](#)?
2. European and Asian films were now imported by US distribution firms (as a means to increase revenue that had declined since 1946) and these films attracted audiences with their newness and difference from Hollywood product
3. Independent cinema was more feasible given the lower expense and smaller equipment
4. “Subtle” shifts from CHC to Hollywood Renaissance: [Some Like it Hot](#) (train clip), [Psycho](#), etc...
5. Needing to increase ticket sales (remember 1946 was peak year in terms of revenue), studios made films directed at specific audiences (niche audiences).
6. The [evolution of the PCA](#) significantly contributed to Hollywood’s unwritten declaration (hinted at in the PCA) that they made films “for everyone.” Now, they started to make more narrowly focused films. Examples of audience targeting:
 - a. Youth Pix
 - i. [The Graduate](#) (1967) trailer
 - ii. [Bonnie and Clyde](#) (1967) trailer, [Ending](#)
 - iii. [The Wild Bunch](#) (1969) trailer, [Shootout!](#)
 - b. Blaxploitation
 - i. arguably the 1st blaxploitation film [Sweet Sweetback’s Baadasssss Song](#) (1971) announces that it “stars the black community” and “Rated X by an all-white jury.” [Here’s a documentary](#) about making *Sweetback*
 - ii. [Shaft’s](#) a bad mother...Watch yo mouth!
 - iii. [Superfly](#) (1972), [Coffy](#) (1973), [Foxy Brown](#) (1974), [Dolemite](#) (1975), [Blacula](#) (1972)

- iv. [collection of trailers](#) from various other Blaxploitation films
 - v. [interesting link](#) about Blaxploitation
 - c. Sexploitation
 - i. Classic example: *Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* (1965)
 - ii. [Bad Girls Go To Hell](#) (1965)
 - iii. [Vixen](#) (1968)
 - iv. [Supervixens](#) (1975)
 - v. [Barbarella](#) (1968)
 - vi. Honorable mention: [Behind the Green Door](#) (1972), [Deep Throat](#) (1972)
 - 7. Typical Hollywood fare did not present the changing social and sexual values
 - a. Moralism that produced Hays/PCA is thought antiquated and hypocritical
 - b. ProdCode weakens/fades
 - c. [ratings system](#) replaces PCA (G, PG, and R)
 - d. The rise of agents as an effect of the rigid control of the studio system falling apart
- here
- 8. Some other films that mark this era:
 - a. [2001: A Space Odyssey](#) (1968) trailer
 - b. [Easy Rider](#) (1969) opening scene, [Jack Nicholson on freedom](#)
 - c. [Midnight Cowboy](#) (1969) trailer, [I'm Walkin' Here!](#) - Won best picture this year!
 - d. [A Clockwork Orange](#) (1971) trailer
 - e. [Texas Chainsaw Massacre](#) (1974) trailer
 - f. [The Exorcist](#) (1973) trailer
 - g. [Rosemary's Baby](#) (1968) trailer
 - h. [Valley of the Dolls](#) (1967), [Neely needs help!](#) - highest grossing film of 1967!

Connections bw thematics and stylistics

- cinematic “tricks”
 - a visual “feel”
 - played out in *The Wild Bunch*
 - an experimental western
 - [these folks are not just killed](#), they are massacred
 - shoot with [Squibs](#)
 - cinematic tricks amplify the violence
 - [Mi-Lai massacre](#) of 1968 reveals a real violence that had been avoided in film
 - began to address more explicit themes and explore anti-heroes rather than the clearly distinguished right/wrong or good/bad dichotomies of classical film
 - camerawork has no desire to hide behind the story
 - [Dutch angle](#)
 - many films had overt political tones whereas films had previously significantly skirted political themes. Think about this: *Casablanca* takes place during WWII, has a primary character save Jews from all over Europe, finds French and

Germans in direct conflict, but we remember the film for the love story. From 1941, the film moves the focus from the war to love, all the while using the invisible style.

The late-1960s brought about some changes in the styles and stories of Hollywood films; but, as we will see, the focus on individual style (Truffaut showed us that film could be a means of personal expression) and stories that presented wildly varied topics, characters and styles were soon overshadowed by Hollywood's turn toward commercialism. However, the stylizations of the Hollywood Renaissance/NHC found continued expressions in filmmakers such as Martin Scorsese (see [Mean Streets](#) and [Taxi Driver](#), eg), Brian de Palma ([The Phantom of the Paradise](#)), George Lucas ([THX-1138](#)), Stephen Spielberg ([Duel](#)), and Francis Ford Coppola ([The Godfather](#))

[The Film School Generation](#) documentary: (Lucas, Scorsese, de Palma, Spielberg, Coppola, etc.)

Dominant Hollywood found financial benefits of turning to big-budget films like that found in blockbusters and [tent pole films](#).

- ([huge advertising budgets](#)) after the success of [Jaws](#) (1975) and then [Star Wars](#) (1977)!
E.g: *Indiana Jones*, *Matrix*, *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, *Marvel Universe*, *Star Wars*...

Consider how these film types tie more fully into popular culture than ever before through [merchandising](#) (Happy Meals, toys, lunch boxes, toothbrushes, screensavers, apps, eg).

[Transformers](#) (2007)

As the blockbuster takes over filmmaking practices and expenses through 1980s+, media companies form as international mega-corporations. During the [1990s](#) and continuing today, through a whole slew of deregulation efforts, Hollywood production companies merged with other media businesses to form the media complex we know today. Check out [this infographic](#) on media ownership; media companies have a financial interest in giving "the illusion of choice."

The move toward offering spectacle films--replete with CGI, star persona and [tremendous budgets](#). In some way, we can see a return to [cinema of attractions](#) (which we discussed in week 1: "a cinema that displays its visibility, willing to rupture a self-enclosed fictional world for a chance to solicit the attention of the spectator." [Tron](#) (1982), [Terminator 2](#) (1991), [Jurassic Park](#) (1993), [Avatar](#) (2009)

Stylistically, we can find ways to [analyze contemporary Hollywood stylistics](#) through the very issues that we have focused much of our semester's conversation: *mise-en-scene*, cinematography, editing and sound.

Consider how the visual stylistics--once the purview of Hollywood film--now operate across so many forms of entertainment. [Video games](#) work from a cinematic perspective and [news programming functions as spectacle](#). When D.W. Griffith showed us how films could develop complex narrative storytelling, he could not have imagined how the moving image has been put to entertainment and to work.