

HL 3002 FILM, POLITICS, ETHICS

Module lecturer: Professor C. J. W.-L. Wee

Semester I, 2020-2021 – August 2020

Tuesdays, 0930-1230 hours, On Line

TENTATIVE – EXACT DETAILS MAY CHANGE BUT TEXTS WILL BE AS INDICATED

The 1960's *counterculture* refers to an anti-establishment cultural phenomenon that developed first in Great Britain and the USA, spreading throughout much of the Western world to the mid-1970s – with London, New York City and San Francisco being hotbeds of early activity – and to other locales such as Japan. There is a link between *more developed societies* and the desire to challenge its very successes. The aggregate movement gained momentum as the Civil Rights Movement grew in the US, and would later become revolutionary with the expansion of the military intervention in Vietnam, though the tendency was not political in conventional party politics. As the 1960s progressed, social tensions developed concerning other issues, and tended to flow along generational lines – among youth and young adults – regarding sexuality, women's rights, traditional modes of authority and the experimentation with psychoactive drugs.

This module introduces students to the impact of the socio-cultural changes of the 1960s on cinematic production in the USA, Britain and Japan. The 'ethics' in this module relates to the moral, social and political principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity, and how older social norms become challenged in the process. The counterculture was instrumental in providing era-relevant content and for the film industry. Some of the film that developed also had an *experimental* edge to it. Although never a formally organised movement, the so-called New Wave filmmakers were linked by their self-conscious rejection of classical cinematic form and their spirit of youthful iconoclasm. Many also engaged in their work with the social and political upheavals of the era, making their radical experiments with editing, visual style and narrative – and in that respect this module deals with such developments, and particularly with the demanding Japanese avant-garde. Japan is included so that students will *not* take Anglo-American norms as universal.

Central skills for the module:

1. Developing close-reading skills for the films
2. Students are expected to engage with *both* the content *and* the forms that the films take.

Note: The secondary readings suggested are for students' discretionary use, but note that *historical context* is vital for understanding the films.

Core material:

Required films/texts (To be acquired/purchased by students – please plan in advance, if you do not wish to watch it at the libraries. **The Japanese films are harder to find illegally though they are available for purchase.** DVDs are available in the Chinese Library AV reserves for 4-hour slots):

US films:

- Mike Nichols (dir.), *The Graduate* (1967) – PS3573.E195G733 1999
- Arthur Penn (dir.), *Alice's Restaurant* (1969) – PN1995.9 W61398
- John Schlesinger (dir.), *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) – PN1995.9 P76M629
- Paul Morrissey (dir.), Andy Warhol (producer), *Women in Revolt* (1971) – PN1995.9.L48

British films:

- John Schlesinger (dir.), *Darling* (1965) – PN1995.9 D221
- Lewis Gilbert (dir.), *Alfie* (1966) – PN1995.9.M27A387
- Donald Cammell and Nicolas Roeg (dirs.), *Performance* (1968, released 1970) – PN1995.9 G3P438 2007

Japanese films:

- ŌSHIMA Nagisa (dir.), *Diary of a Shinjuku Thief (Shijuku Dorobō Nikki, 1968)* – HV6665.J3S556
- MATSUMOTO Toshio (dir.), *Funeral Parade of Roses (Bara no Sōretsu, 1969)* – PN1995.9 T69F981

Readings:

Core Readings

- Russell Duncan, ‘The Summer of Love and Protest: Transatlantic Counterculture in the 1960s’, in *The Transatlantic Sixties: Europe and the United States in the Counterculture Decade*, ed. Grzegorz Kość, Clara Juncker, Sharon Monteith and Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2013) – E846.T772
- Selection from John Clarke, Stuart Hall, Tony Jefferson and Brian Roberts, ‘Subcultures, Cultures and Class’, in *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*, 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp.3-4, 45-59 (Intro. & sections on ‘Rise of the Counter-Cultures’ and ‘The Social Reaction to Youth’; but can focus on pp.45-56 in particular) – HQ799.G7R433

Introduction to British film:

- Online: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/sites/bfi.org.uk/files/downloads/bfi-16%2B-source-guides-1960s-british-cinema-2000.pdf>
- Online: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/lists/10-great-films-set-swinging-60s>
- Robert Murphy, *Sixties British Cinema* (London: BFI [British Film Institute], 1992) – PN1993.5.G7M978

Introduction to US film:

- Barry Keith Grant (ed.), *American Cinema of the 1960s: Themes and Variations* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008); relevant parts.

Introduction to the Japanese avant garde:

- OGURA Eiji, ‘Japan’s 1968: A Collective Reaction to Rapid Economic Growth in an Age of Turmoil’, trans. Kyoko Selden, *The Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 13, issue 12, no. 1 (2015), <https://apjif.org/2015/13/11/Oguma-Eiji/4300.html> **
- Taro Nettleton, ‘Shinjuku as Site: *Funeral Parade of Roses* and *Diary of a Shinjuku Thief*’, *Screen* 55, no. 1 (March 2014): pp.5–28. Obtain from e-journals section of NTU library. **
- UCHINO Tadashi, ‘Misperforming and the Everyday: *Shijuku Dorobō Nikki (Shinjuku Thief’s Diary)*’, conference paper, 2009. **
- Yuriko FURHATA, *Cinema of Actuality: Japanese Avant-Garde Filmmaking in the Season of Image Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013); relevant parts.
- Stephen Barber, ‘Tokyo 1969: Revolutionary Image Thieves in a Disintegrating City’, *Senses of Cinema* no. 69 (December 2013) (Essay on both Ōshima and Matsumoto): <http://sensesofcinema.com/2013/feature-articles/tokyo-1969-revolutionary-image-thieves-in-a-disintegrating-city/>

KEY: ** Required reading for the relevant class.

Note: Search online for reviews of the films; there will be many.

Weekly Schedule:

	Topic
Week 1 12 August	Introduction

	The 1960s, the counterculture, film
Week 2 19 August	<i>Material for discussion:</i> Duncan, 'The Summer of Love', and Clarke et al., 'Subcultures, Culture and Class'. The social context of and the issues in the 1960s.
Week 3 26 August	Penn (dir.), <i>Alice's Restaurant</i> (1969) Mainstream America and the counter-culture
Week 4 2 Sept	Nichols (dir.), <i>The Graduate</i> (1967) Love and bourgeois/establishment values
Week 5 9 Sept	Schlesinger (dir.), <i>Midnight Cowboy</i> (1969) Love and human relationships in the metropolitan centre
Week 6 16 Sept	Morrissey (dir.); Warhol (producer), <i>Women in Revolt</i> (1971) Feminism and gender
Week 7 23 Sept	Schlesinger (dir.), <i>Darling</i> (1965) Swinging London and the opportunities for a young woman
30 Sept	RECESS WEEK
Week 8 7 Oct	Gilbert (dir.), <i>Alfie</i> (1966) Swinging London and the dark side of male promiscuity
Week 9 14 Oct	Cammell and Roeg (dirs.), <i>Performance</i> (1968, released 1970) Pop culture and crime
Week 10 21 Oct	<i>Required reading:</i> 1) essential background to politics in the films, Ogura, 'Japan's 1968'; 2) Uchino, 'Performing' (for <i>Diary</i>); Nettleton, 'Shinjuku as Site' (for <i>Diary</i> and <i>Funeral Parade</i>) Ōshima (dir.), <i>Diary of a Shinjuku Thief (Shinjuku Dorobō Nikki, 1968)</i> Sexual freedom and revolution
Week 11 28 Oct	Ōshima, cont'd. Matsumoto (dir.), <i>Funeral Parade of Roses (Bara no Sōretsu, 1969)</i> Gender and patriarchy

Week 12 4 Nov	Matsumoto, cont'd.
Week 13 11 Nov	Overview
Week 14 18 Nov	In-Class test

Method of instruction:

3-hour seminar with one break

Mode of Assessment:

100% Continuous Assessment

Breakdown:

- Essay assignment I (1,500-1,800-word essay) 25%*
- Essay assignment II (1,500-1,800-word essay) 30%*
- In-class presentation 15%**
- End of semester test (2.5 hour in-class essay test) 30%

Key:

* Inclusive of notes and references. *Must adhere to word limit. Penalties will incur otherwise.*

** Presentation format: a *maximum* of *twenty-five* (25) mins. **Penalties will incur thereafter.** Offer a pared-down overview of the material: (1) *central* ideas/themes, to help focus the discussion; and (2) your critical responses to the film/readings. **Note: Groups must meet lecturer for a short meeting (20 mins.) to give outline of presentation and gain Student Feedback before the presentation.**

Suggested Secondary Reading:

(Do explore and supplement the readings offered here with your own selection. You are not confined to this short list, nor are you required to read everything on this list. There is a fair amount of serious material that can be found online – but Wiki is not acceptable.)

General introduction to the 1960s:

Lytle, Mark H., *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) – E839.L996 (HSS Library)

Miles, Barry, *In the Sixties* (London: Rocket 88 Books, 2017) – DA589.4 M643 (HSS Library)

British and US film readings:

Cowie, Peter, *Revolution! The Explosion of World Cinema in the Sixties* (New York: Faber and Faber, 2004) – PN1993.5 A1C874r (WKWSCILibrary)

J. J. Murphy, *The Black Hole of the Camera: The Films of Andy Warhol* (Berkeley, Calif.: U of California Press, 2012) – N6537.W28M978 (WKWSCILibrary)

Douglas Crimp, *Our Kind of Movie: The Films of Andy Warhol* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2014) – N6537.W28C929 (ADM Library)

Japanese film readings:

David Desser, *Eros Plus Massacre: An Introduction to the Japanese New Wave Cinema: Introduction to Japanese New Wave Cinema* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana UP, 1988) – PN1995.3 J3D475 (ADM Library)