Lecture I Early Film History and Film as Idoelogy - Genre

I. Birth of Film Industy (1893-1925)

A. Edison and kinetoscope 1893,

1.movie parlors, five or sixks, one inch picture, one minute, and one cent, non-synchronic sound,

2.subject was vaudeville or burlesque act, magic

B. 1896 large screen motion picture projection, Lumiere bros

and thomas Armant and C. Francis jenkins

C. Nickelodeons and rapid expansion

1. working class,

2. vaudeville stage at the end of the evening

3. by 1905 securely esconced in their own venue, called

"nickelodeons." Storefront theaters, pretty primitive

4. Nickelodeons demanded a change of form,

with Edwin S. Porter's *The Great Train Robbery*, longer movie,

a. about a10 minute narrative,

b. multiple shots, on location.

5. Immediate popularity of nickelodeons was astonishing, between 1905 and 1907 net profits increased 600 per cent.

6. By 1908 there were at lest 600 nickel theaters in greater New York, estimated daily attendance was 3 -4 hundred thousandper day, gross annual receipts were $6 million in NYC alone

5. National phenomenon in almost all cities

6. censorship: early problem in most cities

D. Adolph Zukor soon to be of Paramount and William Fox

of Foxhad the idea of moving uptown

1. charge 25 cents

2. By 1914 movies had become so popular, exotic, lavish

movie palaces. The Strand in 1914, followed by the Rialto and Rivoli

"With gilt and marble and deep pile rugs, crystal chandeliers hanging from the ceiling and original art workds on the wlls, with luxurious lounges and comfortable chairs, a thirty-piece symphony orchestra to acompany the feature and mighty Wurlitzer to play for the shorts, the Strand established new standards of luxury for motion-picture audiences -- and at only twenty-five cents a seat."

3. By the mid-1920s movies were big business --

capital investment $2Billion, annual revenue $11/4 billion and film industry was one of top ten industries, a positions it maintained for twenty-five years.

4. The dominant mass media of the first half of the century

5. firmly entrenched in California

III. The Studio System (1929-1960)

A. By 1929 Big Five made over 90% of the fiction films in

America, and they controlled 50% of the seating capacity

in America, mostly in urban first run theaters

B. STudios were fiefdoms, the movie industry was vertically

integrated, the studios controlling production, distribution,

and exhibition

C. Businesses were in NY, but most power was with studio

heads, controlled stars, most under exclusive seven years

contracts; controlled other creative talents, producers,

directors, sound, cinematorgraphy, screen writers; production

facilities, land, sound stages, wardrobes, huge backlots.

D. They controlled distribution through practices of blind

and block booking, special deals, length of run guarantees

E. And they controlled most of exhibition, through ownership

and their distribution practices

V. Studio System - Depression and censorship

A. The studio system was not Depression proof,

1. Paramount was forced to file bankruptcy in 1935 but reorganized as Paramount Pictures Inc.

2.Formed in 1924 MGM, under control of Lowe's Inc.

3. Twentieth Century-Fox was 1935 merger between, William Fox's,

4. Warner Bros in 1923, in early depression gangster movies -- rose to top in 1927 with first sound,

a. patents for sound bought up by large corp

they became tied to film industry

5.RKO in 1928, in 1933 the parent co went into receivership, but didn't effect RKO

6. partners with large financial institutions

B. social realism and censorship

1. Early in the 30s Hollywood was making a type of

social realism -- gangster films -- 200 between

1930 and 1932,

a. examples, *Little Ceaser, The Public Enemy,*

*Scarface*

b. emphasize sex and violence and take advantage

of sound

c. glorified gangster hero

d. showed environmental or social causes for

deviance

2. Censorship

a. Catholic Legion of Decency forces Hays office

to institute Production Code 1934, 32 years

i. Hays Office

ii. both proscribed and prescribed

iii. lenghth of kisses to good always triumphs

b. Films not covered by First Amendment until

1952

c. Hollywood discovers its power to invent

and or rearticulate social myths and ideals-

genres

"Hollywood directed its enormous powers of persuasion to preserving the basic moral, social and economic tenets of traditional American culture."

d. traditional genres act as social rituals to reaffirm

social solidarity and american norms and values and ideals

3. war years

a. Between 1941 and 1946 the studio's combined income moe than doubld, rising form 809,00,000 to more than1,692,000,000.

b. One of the few leisure activities available to people during the war years, and they had money

c. By the year 1946 95,000,000 Americans were going to the movies, or 75% of the population each week, that continuedfor about 25 years

VI. Breakdown of the Studio System (1960-1975)

A. US vs Paramount et al

1. ruling breaks up vertical monopoly

2. studios must divest themselves of first run theatres

3. studios realize since they don't own theaters make less

movies and charge more

4. end to block and blind booking

B. Another factor was the HUAC committees investigation of

Hollywood,

1. HUAC began its investigation under the guise

of investigating the influence of Communism in films,

2. to ferret out Communists and Communist sympathizers, Rep Thomas Parnell

3. within the industry - organization with Wayne and Reagan at the head, and "friendly witnesses" Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, 1944

4. In 1945 the Chamber of commerce of the United States

published a report Communist Inflitration in the US,

a. the report claimed that communists were trying to gain control of the entertainment and information media

b. the threat was believed to be of special significance in relation to Hollywood which was seen to have major influence over public opinion.

i. film as propaganda during the war

ii. directors and progaganda documentary

5. the committee used its subpoena power to call both

"friendly" and "unfriendly witnesses""everyone whose loyalty is questioned"

6. Nineteen unfriendly witnesses were named, eleven

were called to testify, ten were sentenced to jail, 8 to

a year, and 2 to six months, charged with contempt for

refusing to answer: Needed to be fired because as

communists they would use their power in media

7. Catch-22, if they answer yes then they name people

they knew, guilt by association and innuendo, if they answerno, perjury

8. Consequences of this went beyond prison sentence, the

Hollywood producers established the infamous "blacklist"

which remained in effect until the 60s.

9. On NOv 24, 1947 Hollywood producers met in NY and

formulated this policy, "We will not knowingly employ a

Communist or member of any party or group which

advocates the overthrow of the government of the US by

force, or by any illegal or unconstitutional method"

10. But even beyond the blacklist this witchhunt had the

effect of "blacklisting certain ideas" of bringing the

culural sphere more into line with the interests of the

economic and political spheres, James Jones, *From Here*

*to Eternity, The Cain Mutiny, The Big Sleep, The Invasion*

*of the Body Snatchers,* anti-communist movies. Led to thecollapse of the Left in the US, narrow spectrum of viable political points of view.

C. TV in the ranch home in the suburbs becomes the dominant form of mass media

1. film industy doesn't see how it can use TV

a. denial

b. won't sell old movies to TV

c. won't advertise

d. won't let stars talk about movies

e. won't buy networks, stations

f. Traditional genres - 1950 plus musicals,

biblical epics

g. gimmicks Cinerama, drive-ins, 3-D

2. demographic changes - birth of suburbia

a. large urban audience that supported large

theaters moves to suburbs

b. strip malls and tiny theaters

D. Studio system breaks up

1. movie attendance declines almost 1/2 (46m) from 1946 and by mid-70s (20m) only about 1/4

2. 1/3 of theaters out of business, 1/3 breaking even

because of concessions 4000 theaters closed between 1945 and 1955

3. Fiefdoms begin to break up

a. sold to large non-media corporations, Paramount

to Gulf and Western, Kinney Shoes, Kirk Kerkorian

and MGM

b. sell their production facilities

c. no longer have stars, directors etc on contract

4. They become financers and distributors for independent productions

a. provide financing for agent-star products,

United Artists

i. financing, advertising, and distribution in

hands of studio

ii. productions independent

b. directors become famous -auteurs

c. mid to late 50s success was measured by

how many TV series were produced

D. Hollywood's Golden Age (1967-1976)

1. Kubrick, Coppola, Altman, Penn, Scorcesee

2. Much of their work was anti-genre, worked against

the conventions of the genre, to question the implicit

social values of the genre - revisionism

3. Movies became popular

a. Universities - film courses

b. emergence of American film institute

c. academic and professional journals

d. major form of artistic, intellectual, and moral

expression

e. Siskel and Ebert At the Movies

VII. New System - global film industry ( 1975- present\_

A. Large multi-national media corps have come to

dominate the film industry, Time-Warner, Mediacorp,

Sony, Viacom, Disney

B. Synergy rules

1. Government vacated consent decree which again

allows monopolization

a. again move toward vertical integration

b. also horizonatl integration

2. Corp control many different media forms, videos,

broadcast TV, cable, pay, music, books, magazines,

3. Not just Hollywood/American but global

a. globally most popular pictures are

US and receive much of revenue

b. 1998 Titanic in France, Italy, Brazil, Armageddon,

Godzilla, and James Bond in other countries

4. Demands of synergy

a. mass audience

b. mass appeal - globally

c. mass distribution - saturation booking rather

than platform

d. mass advertisement and promotion

e. Blockbuster or "neo-classical"

5. The first blockbuster Jaws 1975

a. massive tv advertisement and promotion, every

prime time show for 3 nights before release

b. released in over 400 theaters

c. tie-ins

6. Tie-ins with McDonalds, Burger King

7. The global language of the blockbuster

a. sex, violence, and action

b. don't need to translate

C. Synergy and Independents

1. so much hardware need a lot of product

2. makes some room for idependents and still some

market

I. American Film - Classicism

A. Realism and Formalism and Classicism are the three forms that film takes -- refers to ways in which subject matter is treated

B. Realism (not realistic)

1. subject matter: capture reality

a. extreme end would be filming a person's life, or

i. Truman Show, ED TV,

b. slice of life

c. documentary

2. style - window to the world

a. unobtrusive camera work and editing

i. black and white

ii. hand-held cameras

iii. long takes

b. immediacy - being there as it happens

c. not interpretive, let the images speak, form

surrenders to reality

d. little or no plot

e. usually deals with lower class, or social problems

f. authentic locations and details

g. "Realism" though is not "objective", selections are made, itwants you to believe you are seeing the world objectively

h. no resolution or unhappy resolution

b. Formalism

1. subject matter - form of expression dominates over

subject

a. extreme - images without story

b. creates "world" through artistic images, but

not reality

i. example

c. challenges viewers ideas, perceptions, beliefs about taken-for-granted reality

2. Style

a. story but not coherent or linear

i. actions and plot secondary

ii. focus on marginal

iii. time and space distorted

b. obtrusive camera work

i. camera angles and movement are obtrusive

ii. authorial intrusions

iii. edit to image, association of idea or emotion, rather than action

C. Classicism (not to mistaken for classic, a classic)

"Kiss, Kiss, Bang, Bang"or "heroes, heavies, and honeys"

1. subject matter and formal structure determined by genre

a. westerns, gangster, romance, detective

b. follows formula, conventions of setting ( time and space) , plot, character, resolutions

2. story or narrative is

a. heavily plotted but based on fundamental

action

i.get home

ii. get the girl

b. coherent, linear, using 3 acts, organized around

gradually increasing conflict

i. conflict is clearly defined between good

and evil

c. action drives the plot

d. scenes linked causally in terms of cause

and effect

e. the narrative has closure

i. satisfactory resolution to conflict

i. hero or protagonist resolves conflict through

his actions

ii. get back home, find the girl

iii. characters have plausible motivations but

are not too deep - no Hamlets

3. Heroes

a. frequently relunctant hero stands in middle of

conflict

i. rugged individual

ii. with own personal moral code

b. hero acts on behalf of good

i. act =s violence, usually a gun

c. heroes actions resolve conflict

4. Style - aka "invisible"

a. style in service of narrative, moves the

story along unobtrusively

b. camera movement is unobtrusive, doesn't

draw attention to itself moves story along

c. editing is seamless, or editing to story continuity,

keeping it fluid

d. world, actions, heroes plausible but stylized,

romanticized

e. film images are determined by their relevance to the story and character

f. resolution that emphasizes closure

5. Genres and Americanism

a. emphasizes individualism

i. efficacy and primacy of individual action

ii. ability of individual to shape world

iii. lack of desirability and possibility of

collective action

b. emphasis of action over thought

i. action =s masculine

ii. thought is feminine, or cowardly

c. violence as the main way to solve conflict situations

d. women as bearers of the social values of compassion, understanding,

e. goodness of society

i. progress

ii. American norms and values

iii. American institutions, law, military,

II.. Genre's are forms of standardizaed film production,

A. they are "types" of films, i.e., westerns, gangsters, musicals, screw ball comedies, and the hardboiled detective, war, science fiction

1. the production of genre films is governed by conventions

2. familiar "world", familiar actions, familiar resolutions, celebrate familiar values within dramatic context

3. develop over time become more refined

B. "World" or "space"

1. Specific time and place

a. Western 1865-1890

b. detective 1930 LA

c. gangster 20,30s urban

2. mythic place

a. unlimited vistas and horizons of the southwest

b. maze-like claustrophobia of the city

c. utopian future

3. familiar icons

a. westerns

i. cowboys, indians, rustlers, bars, shoot outs

ii. stagecoach, telepgraph, horses, new towns

b. detective

i. dark office, bottle of rye in drawer next to

ii. flashing neon lights through window,

femme fatales

5. other icons, music, dialogue, casting

a. music

b. dialogue

c. casting - stars

C. Familiar conflict

1. world is contested space

a. threat to social order, to society and all that

it stands for

b. social integration

i. world is okay, not contested

ii. bringing couple together within okay world

2. Ritual of conflict to resolution or closure

a. establishment - community and conflicts

b. animation - of conflict through actions of characters

c. intensification - conventional actions and situations that raise the tension

d. resolution - eliminates threat and celebrates

well-ordered community

D. Heroe, honey's, and heavies

1. Similar heroes, usually coded

a. western redeemer hero

b. private detective lone wolf

2. hero actions usually violence resolves situation

3. other characters are conventions

a. female love interests

b. comic relief

c. bad guy

E. Socially affirmative

II. The Western

A. The western is the archetypal American genre;

1. it is a myth

a. in sense that it is a lie about the American

frontier

b. in sense that myth functions to give society

understanding

c. it is a legimation and justification of manifest destiny

2. First westerns

a. 1898 *Cripple Creek Barroom*

b. 1904 first narrative *The Great Train Robbery*

i. audience mainly poor immigrants

2. it is a "foundational myth" - Manifiest destiny

3. reaffirms Americanism

B. John Ford is the director who is most responsible for establishing the genre of the Western,

1. 1939 *Stagecoach* and 1946 *My Darling Clementine*

2. also Howard Hawks *Red River, Rio Bravo,* George Stevens *Shane*,

C. He won six academy awards, compared to Walt Whitman

the American poet laureate of film, celebrates triumphs,

and eulogizes tragedies.

D. Won his academy awards with other movies, *Young Mr. Lincoln, Drums 39 Along the Mohawk 39, The Grapes of Wrath,40, How Green Was My Valley, The Quiet man,*

*Tobacco Road*

E. Best known for westerns, in fact, he identified himself as

I make westerns. The first of the genre, not first western,

*Stagecoach* (39), on of many in that year and the next, *Jesse*

*James, dodge City, Destry Rides Again, Uniion Pacific,.*

F. *Stagecoach* though is the one which establishes the conventions of the western genre, but *My Darling Clementine*

is more refined with most of the conventions

1. world

a. Time

i. the late nineteenth century after the civil war but before the close of the frontier 1893

ii. Frederick Jackson Turner 1893 pacification

and colonation of frontier was complete

b. mythic place

i. Monument Valley or Promised Land

ii. small island of civilization in

iii. vast untamed natural world

iv. unlimited horizons of American society, a Promised Land

2. icons

a. town in the process of being built which represents the on-going progress of civilization

b. barrooms, stagecoaches

c. cattle rustlers

d. gun fighters

3. conflict precarious balance, the forces of good and evil are engaged

a. civilization vs savagery

i. Indians are drunks on reservations by

now

b. social order vs anarchy

i. rustlers vs honest folk

c. individual vs community

i. church, dance, and barroom symbol of

society whose values will exclude the

Dr. Holiday's

ii. and the Wyatt Earps

4. the archetypal western redeemer hero

a. rides into town

b. "rugged individual"

i. isolated

ii. own personal moral code

c. he mediates the struggle between good and evil

i. he can survive in both worlds, but an outsider to both.

d. resolution through violence

e. eliminates conflict temporarily, or at least that

specific conflict

b. community and its values restored

6. reaffirms Americanism

a. rugged individualism

b. the value of society and social order vs

anarchy or barbarism - manifest destiny

c. freedom and equality

d. social institutions and there integrative functions

i. church

ii. the bar

iii. law and order

G. Native Americans are marginalized

1. NA depicted as bloodthirsty, sneaky, crafty, sly or drunktribes with war apint,

2. thousands of massacres, stereotyped, dehumanized, and always the aggressor

H. Reverses of the historical relationship

1. no explanation of colonialism

2. Indian not presented as human being until *Broken*

*Arrow* and plight not until *Cheyenne Autumn*

3. Nothing from native point of view until *Little Big Man*

I. violence is understated in genre Westerns,

1. violence is a convention, contained

a. it identifies the bad guys

b.is the last resort of the hero,

c. a dramatic trope for resolution

d. catharsis

3. no Sand Creek, Washita, Wounded Knee

D.many scenes glorify social institutions, values,

and rituals

E. Ford master of rituals, weddings, military parades, funerals,

public addresses, dedications, ceremonies, dinner scenes,

drinking, farewell scenes, amiable brawls

F. Women are embodiment of social values,

1. frequently they are reason western hero ultimately acts

2. frequently school marms, mothers, dance hall girls, or

prostitutes - Madonna/Whore

G. Epic grandeur of the American landscape

H. Military is portrayed in positive way and military values

"As an element of our national mythology, the Western represents American culture, explaining its present in terms of its past and virtually redefining the past to acomodate the present."

III. Changing genre

A. As ques emerged about American ideals, the benevolence

of American institutions, in late 50s and 60s

B. Ford's view of society changed and this his reflcted in the change in the genrethe hero, the hero's relationship to society

1. *The Searchers,*

2. *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance,*

3. *Cheyenne Autumn*

C. "How can the morally upright, socially autonomous Westerner continue to defend a repressive society

D.. Ethan Edwards and *The Searchers*

1. Ethan is a psychotic racist who himself upsets

the social order seeks to kill own niece

a. can' t live in either world

b. mirror image of Scar

c. totally isolated famous shot framed by

door as he walks away

2. the setting Monument Valley again

a. is more hostile than beautiful

b. constant howling wind, heat, and cold

c. not a land of infinite possibility but almost

overwhelming

3. Soldiers and military less noble, comedic, violent, almost doubles of renegades

4. civilization is viewed more ironically

a. make fun of marriage and romantic love

b. women don't embody social values

5. traditional conflicts are therefore ambiguous

a. ?civilization vs savagery

b. rugged individual totally alienated from

society

c. society minister and ranger

d. conflict within the family, Ethan's brother's

wife

D. Tom Doniphon in *Liberty Valance*

1. Time - the frontier is closed, looking back over

a casket at the last of the "rugged individuals"

2. "world" - colonized west, the train, but built on a

tissue of lies and myths

a. "when the lie be

3. icons

a. traditional

b. train, conventions, the voter

c. Congressmen and Senators are determing the

fate of the west

4. two heroes

a. traditional but more marginalized

i. Doniphon and his way of life are

ultimately going

ii. "civilization" taking over

b. new hero for new closed world

i. lawyer and Senator

c. world not contested now

i. "civilization" has won

ii. maintaining myths

5. conflict - who really shot liberty valance

a. Tom Doniphon

b. Ransom Stoddard got credit

i. from lawyer to Senator

ii. shaped this new world

c. needs myths

6. resolution

a. no place for rugged individual - coffin

b. no place for truth in this new world of trains

and politics

c. who do we love - nostalgia

i. we love who Hallie loves

ii. John Wayne

d. but we accept the world of Ransom Stoddard

IV. Revisionist Westerns (1965-75)

A. Revisionist westerns

1. Arthure Penn's *The Left Handed Gun, Little Big Man,*

*and Missouri Breaks*

2. Sam Peckinpah *Ride the High Country, The Wild Bunch*

*Garrett and Billy the KId*

3. George Roy Hill *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*

4. Don Siegel *The Shootist*

5. Robert Altman *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*

6. Richard Brooks *The Professional*

B. Influence

1. Genre westerns of Ford, Zinneman, Hawks, and

a. they understand the pro-social implications

of the genre

2. greatly influenced by the social conflict of the 60s and 70s

C. Direction

1. Raise explicit and implicit questions about American society "Americanism"

2. by subverting the genre formula and conventions

D. "World" - space and time

1. usually later than 1890 and the closing of the frontier

a. "civilization" has won and is now consolidating

it victory

i. large financial institutions - banks

ii. railroads

b. west is becoming closed space, no place for

outlaw or rugged individual

E. Conflict

1. Civilization and rugged individual

a. Civilization is depicted as bureaucratic, impersonal, and dehumanizing - repressive

b. only rugged individuals left are outlaws

c. sheriffs are agents of repressive society

2. society is violent

a. needs to eliminate "bad apples"

b. threat to newly emerging social order

3. morally ambiguous see it from point of view of

protagonist

F. Heroes

1. anti-heroes - outlaws

2. may or may not be violent

a. protagonists, their point of view

b. they are more human than establishment

3. actions are ineffectual

4. they are going to die, because society is more powerful and more violent

G. Resolution

1. no resolution

2. anti-heroes are killed

VII Frank Capra and the Screwball Comedy

"Maybe ther really wasn't an America, maybe it was only Frank Capra."

I. Capra perhaps more than any other director understood the relationship between Hollywood cinema and American ideology

A. He worked at a major- minor studio Columbia that was

run by Harry Cohn, kept Columbia in the black during

the Depression

B. He virtually invented a genre the Screwball comedy

with It Happened One Night won all five major academy

awards in 1934.

C. He refined a comic style and romance that eventual

emphasized the romance and comedy less and the battle

between the "little guy" and his traditional American values

and "the system" which was corrupt, faceless, and

dehumanizing

However, Capra interested in unmasking all Isms except Americanism, "The utopian dream is inherent within the existing social order, he seems to be saying, if one simply knows how and where to look."

Homespun populism into romantic comedy

D. The period we are interested in is 1934 to 1941, and most

directly a trilogy, Mr. Deeds Goes to Town, 1936, Mr. Smith

Goes to Washington, 1939, and Meet John Doe 1940

E. What are the characteristics of the genre-- finds fault with the existing social system in or to create dramatic conflicts and then

resolve those conflicts by reaffirming the system and its values

- surface is romantic comedy but with social

and cultural contradictions underlying

- an antagonistic couple bases on sexual conflict, but

more on socio-economic difference

- opposing values systems, rural-urban, middle/upper,

false leaders (power, and true (moral right

, "the myth of goodwill"

- male hero embodies the values of traditional America

but looks somewhat a fool and undergoes ritual

humiliation, needs help of the people

- woman frequently defies conventional expectations of

society, usually a business woman, neither domesticated

nor a siren, participates in humiliation of hero until,

she usually represents the press

- usually a father figure/literally or Freudian who has

lost sight of the American values that allowed him to

reach his position of wealth and prestige

- through the love of the couple change from tyrants

to benevolent patriarchs, but later it is not through

love but the male characters defense of his values

converts the powerful to his side with help of the

people

- just enough romance to keep people emotionally

involved,

- middle class values, reaffirms myth of goodwill,

a little kindness, love of one's neighbor, common

sense, "what can you do with all that money"

B. It's A Wonderful Life

- Rural/City, the city has come to Bedford Falls, Mr. Potter, buy, steal, cheat the little guy. Good capitalist(S/L) small,

rat trap, but working for the little guy, not making any money) BAd capitalist (Bank)

- Bedford Falls and the American Dream as a trap, lots of deep focus, George moving, camera movie, open windows behind him. But then George framed into between brothe and father, then mother and father, George framed by fences and flowers everytime he is with marry, angry at his feelings, all this comes out in crisis. Rained on their honeymoon.  
 C. A significant cultural document, is it more pessimistic, or more complex and ambiguous, does it celebrate American values, traditons, played everty chc

D. Divine intervention to save George Bailey, does this suggest the irreconciliability of complex social problems?

CAN GOODNESS OF COMMON PEOPLE SURVIVE IN NEWLY URBAN-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY?

VI *Film Noir*

A. Film noir is not a genre but a style, a particular American

style, post-WWII through the fifties black and white

1. French critics to describe a dark "black film"

2. influence by other forms of popular culture, esp

novels of

a. James M. Cain, The Postman Always Rings

Twice, Mildred Pierce, and Double Indeminity,

all turned into Film Noir Movies

b. two popular mystery writers Raymond Chandler

*The Big Sleep* and Dashell Hammet The *Maltese Falcon*

B. "world" is doomed.

1. dark, mysterious, and hopeless

2. riddle with paranoia and claustrophobia

3. a fate, inevitability, can't be stopped

4. urban night with patches of light

a. narrow streets, alleys and stairways and

underground garages and subways

b. rain, fog, and wet roads

c. seedy bars and hangouts and dingy interiors

frequently with venetian blinds

5. not contested, it is malevolent, it is hell

a. little line between legal and illegal

b. or between good and evil

C. Conflict

1. malevolent world imposes itself on characters

2. who are weak, suffer from greed, lust

3. American dream gone off the chart, trying to

win the lottery

D. Heroes

1. loners and alienated

a. frequently war vets lost in new post WWII society

b. continuing experience of war and its anxiety

in domestic times

c. "fall guys"

2. femme fatales

a. strong women, not after men, driven by greed

and desire

b. entrap weak hero in triangle of lust, obsessive

desire

c. coded - smoke, long hair, tight clothes, long

finger nails, visual dominance

d. dooms hero and herself

3. vicious psycho killers

F. Resolution

1. evil is punished but unsatisfactorily

G. Style predominantly night, both interior and exterior

1. low key or high contrast lighting, emphasis

on shadows, darkness and areas of concentrated light

2. characters photographed in relation to environment

which had meaning (deep focus)

Examples of Noir movies: The Maltese Falcon dir John Huston, The Big Sleep, dir by Howard Hawks 46, Mildred Pierce, dir by Michael Curtiz,45, Double Indemnity 45 dr Billy Wilder, 45 Murder My Sweet

dir by Edward Dmytryck, new noir, Body Heat by Lawrence Kasdan, Chinatown 74, The Long Goodbye 73, Blade Runner 82, The Last Seduction 93 (Linda Fiorentino)

V. the Hard-boiled detective Genre

A. In the early 4os film noir merged with the detective

tradition to form the "hard boiled detective genre"

1. Films of books by Dashell Hammet and Raymond

Chandler - *The Maltese Falcon, The Big Sleep*

2. Later Mickey Spillane *Murder My Sleep*

B. The "world"

1. The landscape is that of LA in the 30s, "paradise"

of greed, wealth, and power

2. society isn't morally ambiguous, but clearly

in decay

a. is there a clearly defined social order

b. a moral order

3. a quite different world than classic detective

a.Sherlock Holmes, Miss Marple, and Hercule Poirot,

Charlie Chan were puzzle solvings

b. the social world was an orderly universe, the problem

was individual crime which involved rational deductions

of empirical evidence, deductions

c. the traditional detective solved the problem and all

was right with the world, the world is genrally okay

except for criminal types

C. The real conflict in noir/detective

1. private detective in a corrupt and the decaying social system where greed and power rule

2. even withthe little people, everyone trying to grab a little bit or a lot for themselves

D. The hero: he detective/noir genre views the world from the

point of view of the isolated, self-reliant private eye

1.. The hard-boiled private eye similar to

the classic western hero

a. the streetwise detective gets by because he is just as hard, just as tough as the world he comes up against

b. intuitive, with a street-wise savy

2. the hard-boiled detective is a moralist,

a. he has is own moral code, he is cynical, but maintains a code of honor, honest, trustworthy, committed,

b. moral code is like armour that keeps him

isolated from corrupt society around him

c. doesn't do divorce work, can't be bribed, can't be

seduced

"Down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neithe tarnished nor afraid. the detective in this kind of story must be such a man. He is the hero; everything. He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man. He must be, to use a rather weathered phrase, a man of honor -- by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it, and certainly without saying it. He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world."

d. hero because of moral code is able to navigate through morally ambiguous quagmire and act to resolve conflict

E. Resolution

1. the solutions are frequently tentative and incomplete,

2. they are ambiguous, society itself is the

problem, doesn't do divorce work, he isn't seedy.

VI The Genre and the 50s

A. The hard-boiled detective genre underwent an interesting

transformation in the 50s as they were influence by the

pulp detective fiction of Mickey Spillane, 1955, Kiss Me Deadly

B. Mike Hammer values are not those of the isolated individual

in a corrupt world, but are the values of the paranoid

absolutism of Cold War America

C. America is fine if we rid it of deviants, and that is what

Mike Hammer dord

I. Transformation of the Genre -- Revisionism

A. Three revisionist films in the hard-boiled detective genre,

1. Robert Altman's *The Longe Goodbye*,

2. Arthur Penn's *Night Moves,* and

3. Roman Polanski's *Chinatown*

B. Remakes of *The Big Sleep*, *Farewell My Lovely* ( *Murder My*

*Sweet)*, both with Robert Mitchum,

C. *Marlowe* with James Garner,

D. HBO series with Powers Booth as Philip Marlowe

E. HBO movie with James Caan as Philip Marlowe

D. the "world"

1. more corrupt

2. more morally ambiguous

3. and more complex

4. Chinatown - inscrutable, and inevitable

a. powerful leaders political and economic

of LA

b. scheme to irrigate the San Fernando Valley

c. with water from Owens River

d. make millions more

E. conflict

1. never really clear to hero or viewer throughout

2. plot exists but only as misdirection and/or

3. only as way to confront moral ambiguity of world

4. marginal scenes in classical film become the more

important

F. The hero is not knight in insulated armor

1. anachronism, loser, or part of the world

a. Jake Gittes, is not walking the mean streets and no moral code, and instincts are inadequate

i. he does divorce work,

ii. his tools are a camera and binoculars,

iii. he has an office, a secretary, employees

iv. he is part salesman

v. embodies values of success

b. Harry Broll and Altman's Marlowe have a

code but not armor,

i. just anachronisms in this world

ii. doesn't insulate them just silly or stupid

2. heroes actions don't resolve anything

a. he can't comprehend the situation and never

can and can't control it

b. actions are not only ineffectual but make things

worse because he doesn't realize limitations

G..Resolution solutions

1. not just tentative and incomplete, but in favor of

the powerful

2. or Marlowe just cold blooded murder

I. Revisionist films

A. Subject matter: traditional genres

1. westerns:*Wild Bunch, McCabe and Mrs. Miller, Little Big Man*

2. detective: *Chinatown, Night Moves*

3. ganster: *The Godfather I and II*

4. aware of formula and conventions, but

i. twists, inverts, "distorted mirror"

ii. challenging conventions is form of protest

regarding social norms, values, and institutions

that traditional genre implicitly affirms

iii. hypocrisy, contradictions, power, violence of

social order

B. World

1. westerns -

a. later date

b. no unlimited horizons of southwest, or emphasis on that world closing

c. new icons that subvert the tradition

i. cars, clothes, trains,

d. world is not contested, sense of loss

i. civilization won and its the bad guy

2. detective

a. can be same time and place but more sinister

and corrupt

b. or new time and place and more corrupt

C. Conflict

1. social institutions have become repressive and

corrupt

a. no place for hero who now represents society's

ideals

2. society is violent, massive overkill

D. Hero is anti-hero, only place to be free is outside of society

1. crook, drug dealer, outlaw

2. capacity to act limited, ineffectual, might even make

the situation worse

3. heroes action doesn't resolve conflict

E. Resolution

1. no satisfactory resolution

2. hero gets killed or ending emphasizes moral ambiguity

in corrupt society

F. Style is "visible" creates perceptional vertigo

1. influence by formalism

2. camera movement and editing are obtrusive violent

the time, coherence of world

3. lighting and color suggest ambiguity of meaning,

conflicts within character

4. anti-heroes are usually romanticized

I. "Neo-classical" or Blockbuster or "Bang, bang, bang, maybe kiss, bang, bang"

A. Subject matter: traditional genres that allow for action

1. science fiction: *Star Wars I thru 4*

2. police/detective: *Die Hard*

3. spy: James Bond, *True Lies*

4. aware of conventions and follow

a. influence by WWII movies

b. Sat afternoon matinees

B. Action is central

1. story is loosely plotted but linear and coherent

rising conflict toward final confrontation and resolution

2. everything is action, heart stopping continuous action

a. special effects driven

b. emphasis on hi-tec

c. cartoon violence, no collateral violence

3. manichean world of good and evil, no ambiguity

a. this is a bad guy

b. nice butt

4. resolve contradictions and feel good

C. hero not anti-hero

1. might break a few of society's foolish laws to do

the needed kicking butt

2. resolves conflict through mega-violence

3. mythic evil figure- Rasputin

D. Style- fast paced and seamless

1. camera and editing to pace - mtv cuts

2. nothing subtle, lighting is even, no meaning, action

is central

3. visible product placements

E. Tie-ins and sequels

1. movie is part of synergy can be fitted into other

mass medi

2. sold at Burger King

McCabe and Mrs. Miller

I. McCabe and Mrs. Miller, dir Robert Altman, 1972, Warren Beatty and Julie Christie, Sheehan-- Rene Aberjonois, Sears- Michael Murphy, Bart McCoys mail order bride, Sheely Duvall, the Cowboy, Keith Carradine, also John Shuck

II. Only one critic liked the movie and understood its anti-genre significance Pauline Kael, however, a month after the NYT gave a negative review, it was called a "masterpiece" by the same newspaper

III. It is truly an anti-genre movie, it undercuts every conceivable aspect of the genre, and the most basic tenets of American ideology, and like all westerns it is more about the time in which it was made than the west although it is much more accurate in its presentation of the west

IV. Let us look at how it undercuts the conventional formula and characteristics of the the genre

V. Conflict: the traditional conflict of the western genre

A. Conflict between savagery and civilization and assorted

derivative conflicts

B. Civilization, its norms, values, idea of community, is

good, social progress is good

C. Emphases, importance of individual heroism, and social

progress

D. Conflict in McCabe and Mrs. Miller is between, social progress

the new monopolized economic system which it has brought,

and consequently its depersonalizing organization and the

concentration of financial and political power,

E. Questions, not only idea of rugged individual, but what are

the possibilities for being human and for human relationships

in this newly emerging world

F. No inevitable social evolution towards social justice and

economic equality but a rational reconstruction of society

in terms of large economic and financial institutions and the

cooption of political power in their favor

V. the Hero, John "Pudgy" McCabe

A. enters as kind of a "mythical figure but is undercut by

the song "The Stranger" "reaching for the sky just to surrender

B. western hero "myth or fact" -- the man who shot Bill Roundtree

C. Wants to be a businessman, brings social progress to

Presbyterian Church, and country witticism

D. He is though not very bright, can handle the townspeople,

but not Mrs. Miller, and certainly not the "representatives from

the mining company. he is a posturer

V. The Epic grandeur of the American Landscape

A. no long shots of the horizon, no vistas in deep focus, just

the opposite, close horizon, steep, densely forested hills, and

a lens that enhances the vertical, making things more claustro

phobic, rain, sleet, cold, and howling wind, in both the

beginning and the end

B. Natural world reflects the closing of the horizon of

the newly industrializing and monopolizing US and the

precariousness of the human being in this world

VI. Society like in My Darling Clementine, a new town is coming to the wilderness, but the social progress it brings with it is not good. McCabes journey through the movie is a microcosm of the transformation of US society.

VII The town, more accurate,

A. Ramshacle and temporary, the towns people move about

the town like rats, fearful and suspicious

B. The church stands high above the town, but it is an empty

shell, the minister is self-righteous "This is the hous of the lord"

C. Sheehans is the center of town and Sheehan is the leader, but

he doesn't lead through moral strength or courage, just

ownership of property

D. After McCabe enters the town begins its movement toward

social progress, new buildings, always in a state of construction,

no there there, steam engine

E. The buidings reflect the human relationships, tentative,

transient, incomplete

F. townspeople, no attempt to oppose, "social progress", Sheehan sells out, towns people stay away from McCabe, or

hang around Jake Butler, the ignore the violent death of the

cowboy. They ignore McCabe and hypocritically save a

church they have no interest in.

VIII. Community rituals

A. Poker game at Sheehan's, gradually becomes a celebration

of community, but much darker, more confined interior space

B.Church is a hollow shell, no church service, no sanctuary

C. Funeral, Bart McCoy's death and life are insignificant, Mrs

Miller is already recruiting, presentiment of McCabe's death

D. Negotiation -- Sears and Hollander two corporate men

wanting to get back, life and death decision without any

moral conscience.

E. **True Community** -- only true community is outside

of society, the whore house, the bathhous scene and

the birthday, McCabe isolated from both the town and

expressions of community

F. Love

IX Heros actions - not on behalf of the community

A. Act will have no effect on fate of Presbyterian

Church, it will inevitably go the way of the mining co

B. M has no where to run, he was on the run here

C.No gunfight at the OK corral, 3 to 1

X. Violence

A. abrupt, irrational, rational, omnipresent, a society of

violence

B. The young cowboy, the whore, Bart McCoy, McCabe

XI. Race

A. Blacks are marginalized, on the fringes

B. Chinese are ghettoized, now being used as birds

in the mines

C. NA are invisible

XI. Women, traditional role are purveyours of American values, Education, Church and motherhooed

A. Mrs. Miller is not quite Clementine Carter

B. Mrs Mille doesn't tame Western hero, doesn't get him

to act for society, in fact wants him to sneak away

Prostitutes, but true community

XII. The law

A. Serves the interests of the powerful,

B. The lawyer just interested in own ends, "little people

have to keep on dying."

Nashville

Directed by Robert Altman, 1975, nominated for Academy Award as best film, did well, but not great box office,

I. The integration of the political, economic, and cultural spheres.

A. Your life and your life experience is embedded in a web

of power relationships (political, economic, cultural); these

relationships because they privilege the few need to

be legitimated which is the role of American ideology --

opportunity for all, self-reliant individualism freedom--

thought acts as a form of social control in mass society

B. popular culture which has become more and

more ubiqutious permeates all aspects of society and

shapes values and popular consciousness. Popular culturer mediates American experience, shapes it

C. Robert Alman's Nashvile deals directly with the effects

of popular culture - electronic media- as it shapes and

deforms political discourse, social values, violence and death,

interpersonal relationships, and personal identity

D. Altman says that Nashville is his view of American society

and culture.

E. i put Nashville with the "oppositional" films because it

violates most of the characteristics of classical Hollywood

cinema -- no hero, no linear narrative, no closure.

F. It follows twenty-four characters, none of whom the viewer

would probably admit identifying with, episodic, semi/quasi

documentary, satrircal, ends on satire, irony, death and

ambiguity

G.The movies primary theme is on the omnipresence of

elcetronic media and the pervasiveness of popular culture

in all spheres of our lives. consequences

-- a creation of popular consciousness, where individual

have shallow indentity constructs, weak inter-personal

relationships, private worlds that isolate them from

others and a meaningful relationship to society

-- the breakdown of the public and moral sphere as it

becomes a commodity for the media

II. The media is everywhere, TV cameras, tape recorders, tape players, tVs, telephones, microphones, loud speakers, film makers.

Everything we know and experience is "mediated"

A. Most human interaction is "imaged" "recorded" or electronic

in some way

B. Pay attention to:

Presence of electronic media

Its effect on the political, the emergence of the spin

doctor

The displacement, of social and political values

-- Nashville is microcosm and metaphor

for America

-- You may say that I ain't free, but it don't

bother me

C. The mediated electronic world has created a bifurcation

of the public and private, public continually obtrudes

Look at contrasts and contradictions between

public and private

Public-- parades, glitter, applause, recognition, image

Private - homelessnes, emptiness, sterility

D. The presence of violence

Nashville (continued)

I. Two related thematic concerns that are characterized through John Triplets manipulation of the music scene in Altman's Nashville and distegrating social relationships and personal identities

A. The present structure of business and politics is essentially

corrupt

B. The decay of social institutions, relationships, and the

shallowness of identities reflects a confusion, displacement,

and complacency which is motivated to a greater and

greater degree by the desire for success and desire for

"desire"

II. The film argues that a) politics and the entertainment industry have become two sides of the same coin -- both deformed, shallow, and commodified, b) everything is for sale, or can be bought, the Grand Old Opry exists to sell goo-goo candy bars, advertising all over the race track, and this is 1975, now everything has a corporate name before it

A. Both systems are manipulative, Hal Philip Walker's slogans

are hollow, empty,

1) have you ever stood on a high and windy hill,

does Christmas have the smell of oranges

2) he uses corporate metaphors for citizenship, "fellow

taxpayers and shareholders of America"

3) wants to eliminate lawyers from participation in

government because they confuse and manipulate

the public but has depended on Tripletts manipulative

and deceptive manipulation of people to gather a

huge TV crowd, manipulates Barnett into the

concert at the Parthenon, and Sueleen.

3a) Triplett lies, denies, ridicules, he uses his soft

sell sales pitch "the last guy in the world to try and

change your mind about something you don't want

to do," or not here "to sell you a bill of goods"

4) When you pay more for a car than Columbus

5) Haven Hamilton like Walker deals in sophistry

- 200 years "We must be doing something right"

- and hypocracy, he has a mistress and has left his

wife, "unpack your bags"

- and shallow solutions, "Keep a goin"

6) his answer appears to be a quasi-religious

patriotism and a dogged determination, that is what

sells best

C. Political complacency and the deformation of values is not only seen in the canned political campaign with its empty slogans, but in the song frequently sung, and by minorities

1) "It Don't Worry Me"

"I'm Easy"

D. The complacent acceptance of violence and the omnipresence

of the gun

1) guns are us

2) the multi-car pile-up, the fender bender, Their favorite activities include autograph seeking, ambulance chasing, and fistfighting. "Its America .. .all those mangled bodies. I wish my camera man were here>"

E. The breakdown in all relationships and personal identities

reflected in the contrast between the public and private

1) Linnea and Delbert Reese, he hasn't taken the time to

learn sign language, a loveless marriage, each seeking

SEX not love somewhere else, in anothe empty relationship

Delber a professional yes- man

2) Haven Hamilton and Lady Pearl and Bud

3) Connie White ( Haven) and Barbara Jean (Haven

4) Barbara Jean and Barnett, "I've run your life pretty good"

5) LA Joan, can't generate any empathy to her dying

aunt, identity through multiple sexual partners

6) Private Kelly, Vietnam, Barbar Jean sings, "makes me feel

better", "takes me away from them blues"

7) Tom -- can't stand being alone, listens to his own music

all the time

8) Bill and Mary

9) Kenny "if there is any cleaning up to be done, we are

going to have to do it." entering Mr. Greens

10) Sueleen and Wade

"can grow up to be president" Connie White at the Gran

Old Opry, or a presidential assassin

"Done what should have been done. And if we don't get

it done today we may run out of tomorrows," standing

by the garage door

Barbara jean on the boat, "careless disrespect . . . it hurts so

bad . . . walk away from this battleground . . . your own

private world . . . hiding your burden ...

American flag and "My Idaho home"

Titanic 1997

I. Disaster movie and romance

A. Society

1) class conflict, confined quarters and restricted

to certain parts of the ship, locked in the bottom,

enough life boats for the right people

2) locked down at the end

3) conflict with gender and social roles, womans

place is to sacrifice for family and play the right

role for the man

4) technological hubris, "even God couldn't sink

it", no life boats, who needs them they just clutter

up the walk way

5) pressure from the economic, "the company", to

use all the engines and break the record

6) cowardice, failure to save even those that could

be saved

My question are any of these really developed as critiques of society, can we control technology? Do we have class in the US? The influence of economic power in our society? Or are they just plot devices, conflicts for dramatic purposes? Does the movie make disaster palatable, a "good movie going experience." In this sense it fits in

with Schindler's Lists, Amistad.

II. It is obviously a product that meets the needs of the new global organization of mass media, does it have the characteristics of

a blockbuster

A) two young waspish heroes, no depth of character, no

ambiguity

B) good and evil, no ambiguity

C) romance and action oriented

D) sanitized violence

E) total visual and aural experience

III Titanic 1953

script won Acadmey Award, black and white.

A) no class conflict, 1st class and 3rd class, were restricted

by a little chain across a stairway, had to be saved by

hero because they were so stupid

B) all the men and the crew and the captain were heroic and

they died singing "Nearer my God to thee"

C) Conflict -- European snobbery and American dream

D) Romance Robert Wagner and snooty Euro/American girl

E) no techno hubris, just mistake, because of insufficient info

Thelma and Louise

1991 dir Ridley Scott, screenplay Callie Kouri, Geena Davis, Susan

Sarandon

It received an incredibly negative reaction in press for advocating violence, and in my classes

I. It is a combination of three genre films, the road outlaw, the western, and the buddy movies

A. It is a kind of ironic reversal as a road outlaw film

1) women are the protagonists whose point of view

we the audience assume

2) men are one dimensional plot devices

3) this reverses the typical place and type of women

in the road outlaw film, typically family alternative,

one night stands, and betrayal

4) Even though much of the film is in or near

Ford country and the opening scene is a long shot

with horizon and clouds -- frontier is closed and

the protagonists are trapped

5) like other road outlaw films the protagonists are

driven beyond the law by social forces that drive

them to act

B. As a western the movie is kind of a formalist satire

1) like the revisionist western no more struggle

between civilization and savagery, like the revisionist

western struggle is between oppressive institutions

and freedom

2) the west only exists as the silver bullet, the meat

market of a commodity culture, Harlan rides the range

as a sexual predator, and gets gunned down, the west

belongs now to truckers, and even, mountain bikers

3) a few cowboys nostalgically dot the scenery for a

few seconds before the protagonists

C. As a buddy film, the protagonists interaction and developments engage the viewer, generate a community of two in opposition to society

II. Classical or Formalist

A. Like Easy Rider the dominant conflict is the conflict

as Ridley Scott says about freedom and choice in a patriarchal

society

1) the men are one dimensional, hold the positions of

power, Louise is in food service, Thelma married unemployed

2) women are dependent, Thelma to her sales manager

husband, Louise to Jimmy, typically she wants to get

married and he doesn't

3) JD through sex, guns and sexual violence

and Capt Hal Slocumb from the

Arkansas State Police

4) Relationships are view as structures of power, and

are formally depicted, patriarchy

-Thelma at home, moving camera, can't get out

of the kitchen

- Louise trapped in the restaraunt

- sunshine as they decide to have some fun

jump cut, instantly dark, street filled with

trucks, married woman doesn't go out

for a good time

- Silver Bullet, rape and violence as forms

social control over women

- as they leave after the murder, trucks everywhere, honking blaring horn

- oil well field, telegraphy polls, airplanes

- gender, dependency, sexual objects

5) the experience of freedom is depicted in their

ride through the canyon lands, with the canyons

lit, the land barren -- the contradiction of freedom

- no communes as in Easy Rider and no

living off the land

- barb wire encloses the road and helicopters,

and guns close of any possibility of freedom

- freedom has been reduced to a kind of

existential experience

- except now there responses are reactive, but

active

Film as Art

I Shot

A. The most basic idea of filmic technique, not the distance

from the camera to that which it is filming, but the amount

of the human body that appears within the frame

B. Types of shots, extreme long shot, long shot, full shot,

medium shot, close-up, and extreme close-up

C. The shots function as forms of expression, the type of shot

represents an interpretation and selection on the part of the

director. Little Red Riding Hood

D. The extreme long shot is usually an exterior shot, it

establishes location for the closer shots, however, in

John Ford's Westerns it also establishes the mythical world

of struggle between opposed forces

E. The establishing shot need not be an extreme long shot, it

can be a close-up, *The Graduate*, it establishes the predominate

motif, existential alienation, and it intrudes. Close-ups generally are more personal, reveal emotion, reaction shot

F. The long shot has the appearance of putting the viewer at

the traditional stage distance from the subject matter, several

human figures, full length might be in the frame. The full shot

includes the hman body within th frame with the head at

the top. the medim shot includes several characters not fully

in the frame and is used for dialogue, this includes the over

the shoulder shot. The extreme close up shows only a part of

a characters face.

II Film as art the shot and the angle, motion

A. The meaning that a shot expresses, the emotion that it evokes in the viewer is tied to the angle of the camera

B. There are several basic angles: birds eye view, high angle low angle, point of view shots, oblique angle

C. Birds eye view - Abraham Polansky *Force of Evil, City*

*Slickers, Apacolypse Now*

D. High angle, diminishes significance of characters in relation

to environment *Bonnie and Clyde,* to each other*, body Snatchers*

E. Low angle, enhances stature, *My Darling Clementine.*

*Noseferatu*

F. Oblique angle -- *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*

III. Film as Art as Shot as Angle as Lighting

A. All shots are lit for a specific reason, especially black and

white, *film noir*, their are three types of lighting, high key,

low key, and evenly lit

B. Evenly lit, musicals, "blockbusters", the movies are not

emotionally shaded, or nuanced, imagine *Singin in the Rain*

if Gene Kelley was shot in shadows.

C. High key or high contrast lighting -- emphasis is on a

combination of extremely defined shafts of light and

equally defined areas of darkness. Can suggest a manichean

world, struggle between good and evil

D. Low key, or low contrast lighting, emphasizes shadows and

light. It suggests ambiguity, ambivalence, no clear defintin

between good and evil, right and wrong

IV Film as Art color and sound

A. Color tends to work subconsciously, evokes emotions

B. how they work, *McCabe and Mrs Miller*, greens and golds

*The Gradute* white, Antionioni in *REd Desert*, grays and reds,

drabness of modern world, red as psychological state

C. Colorizing black and white throws off compositional balance

D. Sound -- three classification, sound effects, music, and

spoken language like lighting is intentional

- synchronous -- realistic -- or nonsynchronous -

formalistic

- spoken language sound montage in McCabe and Nash

- sound effects part of establishing place but also

expressionistic, *Thelma and Louise,* SILENCE

- music - McCabe, Thelma and Louise, Do the Right Thing

V.Film as Art, Lenses, Movement, Editing, Composition

A. Camera motion and meaning, moving camera, or stationary

for psychological and thematic reasons

B. Moving camera vs editing , editing is quicker and cheaper

but moving camera more lyrical, more meaning

C. Seven types, pan (swish), tilts, crane shots, dolly shots, zoom,

handheld shots, aerial shots

D. A few pan, camera is stationary, on tripod, and moves

horizontally, epics, reaction shots, character in frame, emphasize the unity of space and people and objects within

space

E. Tilts, point of view, psychological shift with character

F. Dolly shots, trucking or tracking shots, Stagecoach, pull back

dolly, Gone with the Wind

G. Stationary camera stability and order, or in Othello, frozen,

but moving camera, handheld camera, realistic, the motion and

intensity of life, its lack of order and its instability

H. Zoom -- plunged in or plunged out

I. **Lenses,** three types standard (nondistorted), the telephoto

lenses, and wide angle (sharpnes of focus on all distance planes), **filters**- intensify given qualities and suppress others,

Ford and clouds, Altman McCabe

VI Editing

A. Editing is simply joining one strip of film (shot) with another, editing creates meaning by the way in which it

juxtaposes images into a sequence

B. Editing in most American films is seamless, cutting to

continuity, invisible, it is functional, condenses action,

currently only one kind of editing, quick cuts

C. Crosscutting - DW Griffith or hunter and hunted, chase

in True Lies - Jumpcutting

Essay/Exam #1

The essay/exam is worth forty (40 points). It should be a minimum of 4 to 5 pages in length, typewritten and double-spaced. Follow the directions carefully. Write separate essays for each question that you answer. Be sure to review the criteria that I use for grading (see syllabus). The essay/exam is due Thur Mar 16.

A. Answer **one** of the following questions. (Total: 10 points)

1. The western genre is uniquely American and it is an affirmation of American society - its history, its institutions, and its values. Explain, using specific and concrete examples from *My Darling Clementine*. (10 points)

2. Explain the ways in which *The Graduate* "revises" the screwball romantic comedy as a way of challenging certain American values. (10 points)

B. Answer the following question. (Total: 20 points)

1. a) Explain the ways in which the social unrest of the 1960s/70s reflected the hypocrisy and contradictions of the "American dream" and "ideology" of the 1950s. b) Explain the ways in which the "revisionist" western *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* reflect the social unrest of the times. (20 points)

C. Answer the following question. (Total: 10 points)

1. Explain *Chinatown* as a "revision" of the noir/detective genre, specifically *The Big Sleep*. How does it reflect transformations in American society of the 1960s/70s? (10 points)