



LIFELONG LEARNING MISSISSAUGA

Reflections in the Hall of Mirrors: American Movies and the Politics of Idealism

Thursdays, April 3 to May 22, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

**Burnhamthorpe Community Centre
1500 Gullenden Drive, Mississauga, ON, L4X 2T7**

- April 3 Introduction: If History Has Taught Us Anything...The Kennedy Era 1960-1963**
The first class introduces students to the overall theme of the course. We begin with an illustration of how American movies act as a tissue sample of the social and political culture of the nation. The idealism of the Kennedy era along and his tragic assassination continues to ripple through the decades.
- April 10 You Can't Always Get What You Want: The Johnson Era 1964-1968**
Although 1964 began with the virtues of the Civil Rights Act, the Lyndon Johnson age was coloured by the escalation of the war in Vietnam, a conflict that inadvertently added to the increasing racial tensions at home. We delve into movies of varied qualities which absorbed the divisive issues of the period.
- April 17 An Offer You Can't Refuse: The Nixon Era 1968-1974**
The Nixon era – reactionary and repressive as it was – produced some of the most provocative, controversial, and enduring American films. Included in this lecture are some alluring commentaries on American life.
- April 24 The Days of Future Passed: The Carter Era 1976-1980**
The holistic Carter period tried to put salve on the country's wounds over the failure of Vietnam and Nixon's resignation after Watergate. We will turn our attention to movies that sought to define the social lassitude of the time rather than shy away from it.
- May 1 The Big Sleep: The Reagan & George H. W. Bush Era 1980-1992**
American movies in the Reagan years not only produced retrograde aspects of American life, movie audiences changed as well. The popular movies of the Reagan era were evasive, producing a wilful kind of amnesia in the mass audience. The Bush era, with its kinder, gentler aura, ushered in movies that confounded the nation's grip on reality. The hit movies also presented false glimpses of history.
- May 8 Camelot Redux: The Clinton Era 1992-2000**
If the Bush years were about erasing the political reality of its time in order to be 'kinder, gentler,' the President himself became reflected in the movies.
- May 15 No Man's Land: The George W. Bush era 2000-2008**
The George W. Bush era is divided into two portions. The first part comes before 9/11, when the Cold War was over, and action films reflected a country with superheroes defending the nation against terrorist attacks. The second part, after 9/11, when (for a brief period) American action films lost some of their jingoistic stridency and revealed a country in grief and contemplation.
- May 22 Invisible Man: The Barack Obama era 2008-2016**
When Barack Obama was elected as the first black President of the United States in November 2008, it was a momentous event in American history. But those hopes have waned somewhat since. In part, it was because Obama, the avatar of another New Frontier, couldn't be found and wasn't allowed to exist.

Course Director: Kevin Courier, Author and Film Critic

Registration Fee: \$40.00 per person/per series

For information or to register, go to www.lifelong-learning-mississauga.com or Phone 647-300-4878

Filmography

1) **If History Has Taught Us Anything: The Kennedy Era 1960-1963**

The Godfather, Part II
The Kennedy Assassination (TV coverage)
Seven Days in May
The Manchurian Candidate

2) **You Can't Always Get What You Want: The Johnson Era 1964-1968**

Dr. Strangelove
In the Heat of the Night
Cool Hand Luke
Night of the Living Dead
Bullitt

3) **An Offer You Can't Refuse: The Nixon Era 1968-1974**

Easy Rider
Alice's Restaurant
Midnight Cowboy
Dirty Harry
Joe
Billy Jack

4) **The Days of Future Passed: The Carter Era 1976-1980**

The Deer Hunter
Coming Home
The Conversation
Who'll Stop the Rain
The Conversation
Nashville

5) **The Big Sleep: The Reagan & George H.W. Bush Era 1980-1992**

Invasion of the Body Snatchers
Winter Kills
Blow Out
excerpts on Reagan era 'feel good' movies from Decade Under the Influences
Forrest Gump
Field of Dreams
True Believer

6) **Camelot Redux: The Clinton Era 1992-2000**

Dave
In the Line of Fire
Primary Colors
Wag the Dog

7) **No Man's Land: The George W. Bush era 2000-2008**

9/11 television coverage
We Were Soldiers
Tears of the Sun
The 25th Hour
Charlie Wilson's War

8) **Invisible Man: The Barack Obama era 2008-2016**

Rachel Getting Married
The Visitor
Unstoppable
The Butler