

Relate the films to the times movie reviews examples

[Countries](#), [Vietnam](#)



The 1970s was a decade of the public's disappointment with the government and its policies, domestic and foreign, social and economic. It was the time of counterculture and various movements and protests that followed the example of the civil rights movement. The most important topics for the American people were the distrust for the government after the long-lasting Vietnam War that weakened not only the United States, whose economic situation was already devastating, but other countries, including Vietnam, Cambodia and their neighbors; the Watergate scandal that made Americans doubt that the country is in fact a democratic one, the state of mental institution and the treatments they used, as well the conditions they provided to their patients. The women's rights movement was quickly gaining strength, as women started fighting for equality in different sectors and areas, and homosexuality was becoming more acceptable in the society. People became cynical and more concentrated on their selves, which led to the increased value of individual's worth based on his or her achievements and financial status. The counterculture that formed in the 1960s condemned the Cold War and the Vietnam War, included movements for women's and gay's rights and the fight against racism. American artists, in the general meaning of the latter word, reflected the relevant views of the decade in their respective artworks, and cinematography was one of the most successful means to depict the 1970s Americans realities and reflect the concerns of ordinary people. Among the most famous movies of the decade that made a huge impact on cinematography and became classics are the 1970 MASH by Robert Altman, 1978 The Deer Hunter by Michael Cimino and the incredible 1975 One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Miloš

Forman. All three movies became incredibly popular upon their release and were widely acclaimed and criticized for the controversial topics they raised. These movies were nominated and won numerous awards and are still viewed nowadays as classic movies of their time. The main themes of the movies are the Vietnam War and its atrocities in *The Deer Hunter*, the important counterculture issues in *MASH* and the ineffectiveness and violence in the mental institutions of the USA, as well as the fight of a proactive and free citizen with the Establishment in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

The MASH is considered a satirical black comedy with elements of drama. It tells the story of three captains Hawkeye, Duke and Trapper and their adventures during the Korean War. Although the movie takes place during the Korean War, it is actually an allegory to the Vietnam War that going on during the time the film was shot. The three main characters are very comic, rude, undisciplined, and disobedient. Doing whatever they want most of the time, they are insulting other characters, and their jokes and insults include sex and sexuality, religion and race, as the only central African-American character bears a nickname “Spearchucker”. While the comedy may seem offensive to many people, it is actually a satire to the realities of the 1970s. First of all, the director brilliantly interrupts comic scenes with violent scenes of operations that remind the viewer that the movie takes place during the actual war with wounded and dead people. This way, the director not only shows how pointless the presence of the American troops is on the territory of Vietnam, but also reflects the hotly debated topics of sexism, racism, sexuality, religion and the laidback attitude toward the American

involvement in the far-away war by many Americans, who do not take a stand on the issue. One of the most graphic scenes used to show the contrast between the realities of war for the local people and the realities for the foreign participants, including the American soldiers, who stay in relative safety and will once leave the country that will be devastated by war is the football scene, during which the soldiers get very agitated and eager to play their favorite game. They are never as excited during the rest of the movie, and this scene reveals their attitude to the events that are happening around them. They are not very interested in the outcome of war and do not engage in reflection on their behavior and their engagement in the events, as their favorite activities are chasing women, playing football, mocking at other people and other mundane things. No doubt, the end of the movie shows Duke and Hawkeye simply being sent home. The 1970s were marked by the decrease of the influence of religion in the day-to-day life of Americans. This tendency is shown in the film scenes, where the main characters are mocking Frank Burns, a religious man, whose praying annoys Duke and Hawkeye. They find his religiosity childish and especially hypocritical, when Burns has sex with Hot Lips, the chief nurse of the camp. Later in the movie Duke and Hawkeye organize the Last Supper for suicidal Waldowski, who believes he is homosexual because he failed in sex with a nurse. In this scene, the main characters not only mock religion, but also show how sexual encounter with a woman can cure a man from homosexuality. The movie thus not only objectifies women, but mocks the existing views that homosexuality can be cured. To some, these scenes can seem very offensive, but they are actually a satire on the views of those, who oppose

women's and gay's rights. The movie also shows that there are only two types of women, as the soldiers see them, as these are sensual, sexual and easily accessible women on one hand and stern and rough women on the other hand. These views established in the movie, as well as objectifying of women reflect the existing sexism in the society, where women are denied equality and are seen as dumb objects of male desires. These satirical scenes were especially relevant with the ongoing rise of feminism. Overall, MASH is a great movie that deserves so many awards, high ratings and attention because of its vivacious depiction of the most relevant social issues of the counterculture and American public as a whole, in a black comedy manner that made the movie recognizable and memorable till nowadays. One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest is an ingenious work of art that is still considered one of the most influential movies in the history of American cinematography and of its decade. The movie is full of symbolic representations of the fight between ordinary American citizen and the government, the Establishment that wants to suppress freedom of will, thought and decision making. At the same time, the movie directly points to the major flaws of the American views on mental health and those, who had issues with it. McMurphy, portrayed incredibly by Jack Nicholson, who won his first Academy Award for this role, is transferred from prison to the asylum in his attempt to facilitate his term for serving punishment. He thought it would be easier for him to spend time in the hospital; however, he did not expect that his experience would lead to tragedy. Once in the mental institution, he realizes that at the bottom of a seemingly democratic and helping ward is a group of tyrannical authoritative people, who wish to

impose their will on all patients of the asylum, admitted both voluntarily and involuntarily. They do not fight with the main antagonist Nurse Ratched, who is a symbol of an establishment, an institution until the arrival of McMurphy, who wakens them and prepares for a rebellion aimed at gaining the proclaimed rights and freedoms that are currently present only as illusions. The antagonism between the rebellious McMurphy and Nurse Ratched represents the ongoing disappointment of American public in the government after the start of the Cold War, the Watergate scandal and the Vietnam War, as it failed its citizens and manipulated with their opinion and views through media. The American people believed that it had the right of making decisions for its country's actions and was made believe that it was exercising its right. The tensions rose after President Nixon was fully pardoned by President Ford in 1974. During the investigations of the scandal, people realized that the government only created an illusion that it was acting according to the will of the citizens, while it was doing as it considered right behind the back of the people. This reality is especially brilliantly depicted in the scene of public vote for watching the World Series, where the nurse forbids watching the event despite the Chief casting a decisive vote for it. This is done in a democratic fashion, as the nurse closes the meeting on a seemingly legal basis. The suppression of any attempt to manifest own will or express an opinion that is different from the ones accepted by the Nurse Ratched and the personnel of the facility reflects the government's direct and open, as well as hidden suppression of the differing opinions and especially of the activist during marches and protests taking place during the 1960s and 1970s. At the end of the day, McMurphy

sacrifices his life in his fight, but the fight is still not lost, as Chief Bromden learns that there is no need for him to pretend to be dumb and deaf, as in the actions of McMurphy he sees hope that the changes are going to come, and for this reason he escapes the facility after so many years of being inactive and numb. And although the rest of the patients choose to stay, fight with evil is one by winning one person at a time. At the same time, the movie shows the violent practices of the medical facilities for people with mental health issues. The media has imposed a social stigma on people with mental health problems, and there were usually portrayed as dangerous or funny. In this movie they are shown as people, who can successfully function and be a part of the society if treated respectfully and with care. The use of electroconvulsive therapy on the McMurphy shows how the abuse of this method of treatment can make a normal person a vegetable, and this therapy was widely used during those times as more effective compared to the medications. The movie also shows that medical facilities that are supposed to be comfortable and provide good living conditions for the patients, who already struggle, actually resemble prisons and can make anyone feel worse. The film initiated and boosted the changes in this sphere, as doctors started resorting to such violent measure less and less often, increasingly opting for medication. The movie is considered a classic one not only because it reflected the existing struggles and issues in the society, but also because it stay relevant today, when people are still in confrontation with the controlling government that fails to satisfy public needs in many areas.

The Deer Hunter has been very criticized after its release, as it was seen as

praising American heroism during the Vietnam War and, thus, being a pro-war movie. The film tells a story of three male friends, Michael, Nick and Steven, who were ordinary blue-collar workers of the Russian-American decent. The first half of the movie shows their life in America, in particular, them attending Steve's wedding, and later the deer hunting, during which Michael promises to protect Nick during their serving in Vietnam. All three friends were drafted for the Vietnam War. The director creates a contrast between the friends' life at home and in Vietnam. They have to face violence and threat of death, as they are forced to play Russian roulette when in captivity by the North Vietnamese soldiers. Eventually, they manage to escape, with Steven losing both of his legs, Nick being admitted to the hospital and having a breakdown and Michael returning home and starting to date Linda. The movie ends with Steven agreeing to return home despite his initial lack of desire, as he is now disabled, and with Nick becoming a drug addict in Vietnam and killing himself during the Russian roulette game with Michael. The movie caused controversial reception as it showed the atrocities of the Vietnam War and thus condemned the war on one hand, but at the same time showed Americans as Vietnam heroes and North Vietnam soldiers as monsters on the other hand, thus, justifying the American actions in the country. While showing such heroism and patriotism, the movie, nonetheless, fails to show the violence of the American troops in Vietnam, as it is widely known that they committed many crimes during the War too. While the movie is not very realistic and can be deemed biased, it still managed to reflect the American views on the War. First of all, it shows how ordinary Americans had no clue what the war was like and kept on leading

their ordinary lives, while American soldiers were dying on a foreign territory in the War that did not directly affect the USA. In the next scenes the director shows how the unsuspecting American men come to realize what this war entails, and focus their efforts primarily on their survival. It praises not only American patriotism, but also friendship and solidarity even in the most dangerous situations. This movie was a depiction of the American veterans, who survived the War and had to come back to their normal life trying to forget the unforgettable traumas they were exposed to. It is also a tribute to those, who did not survive the War and either died when fighting in Vietnam or later when failing to recover from the tragedy they witnessed in their lives.

All three movies are incredibly talented and precise reflections of the prevalent views in the American society of the 1970s. The directors succeeded in depicting the most important issues, which were the Cold War, the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal and their consequences both for the American people and for the country. They were and are still relevant, as the history is repeating itself after decades, when the problems with racism, sexism and other prejudices and discrimination are still vital and relevant, and America is still involved in numerous conflicts outside its territory and that do not directly involve its interests and security. These classic films will keep being relevant as they discuss the long-standing social problems that have been of major concern for humanity and for the American viewers for a long time and still stay unsolved.