



American Films of the 70s: Conflicting Visions

Peter Lev

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While the anti-establishment rebels of 1969's *Easy Rider* were morphing into the nostalgic yuppies of 1983's *The Big Chill*, Seventies movies brought us everything from killer sharks, blaxploitation, and disco musicals to a loving look at General George S. Patton. Indeed, as Peter Lev persuasively argues in this book, the films of the 1970s constitute a kind of conversation about what American society is and should be—open, diverse, and egalitarian, or stubbornly resistant to change.

Examining forty films thematically, Lev explores the conflicting visions presented in films with the following kinds of subject matter:

- Hippies (*Easy Rider*, *Alice's Restaurant*)
- Cops (*The French Connection*, *Dirty Harry*)
- Disasters and conspiracies (*Jaws*, *Chinatown*)
- End of the Sixties (*Nashville*, *The Big Chill*)
- Art, Sex, and Hollywood (*Last Tango in Paris*)
- Teens (*American Graffiti*, *Animal House*)
- War (*Patton*, *Apocalypse Now*)
- African-Americans (*Shaft*, *Superfly*)
- Feminisms (*An Unmarried Woman*, *The China Syndrome*)
- Future visions (*Star Wars*, *Blade Runner*)

As accessible to ordinary moviegoers as to film scholars, Lev's book is an essential companion to these familiar, well-loved movies.

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