Hollywood 1930-1990 Comparative study. Institutional Contexts: Old & New Hollywood



■ New Hollywood

1960s

Box office was dropping rapidly.

Big stars from the Studio era no longer appealed to **young audiences**.

The old 'entertainment factory' styles/formulas were no longer guarantee of success.



1967 A series of groundbreaking films (ie In the Heat of the Night, Bonnie and Clyde) ignored Hays Code rules.

1968 Hays Code is scrapped in favour of a new ratings system:



No more 7 year contract for actors, they were free to choose their roles and have control of their image.

Conglomerates started to buy struggling studios.

Major studios rented out their equipment to New Hollywood Directors.





Summer blockbuster:

Jaws (1975) Star Wars (1977). Much needed profits for the studios. Welcome to the **family blockbuster** era: Previously winter was seen as the prime time for big releases, but the success of

Jaws introduced the early summer weekend release pattern that is still used today.



Investment in new Home video technology such as cable TV, VHS & Beta.

'Hard Body' era of 'Hypermasculine' narratives.

Style of the new Hollywood era revitalised the industry:



- Low budget
- Director driven
- On location



- Influence of European New Wave aesthetics
- Stanislavskian acting style
- Realist character driven narratives
- · Anti authoritarian themes.
- Liberal attitudes to sex & drugs
- · Politically charged.

Rising stars of the New Hollywood era:



Many New Hollywood directors struggled to stamp their auteur vision onto films that made profit in the long term after the initial innovations of the late 60s. With a few exceptions, some directors continued to be visionary, and profitable.

Notable 'flops' that changed the landscape of Hollywood:



Cleopatra (1963):

Huge budget, huge stars, but biblical spectacle/sword and sandals epics had gone out of

fashion. This was the last studio epic of the era.



Heaven's Gate (1980): towards the end of the New Hollywood era, young and innovative

directors were given bigger budgets and more freedoms. But these big ideas did not always translate to big audiences. Studios became wary of taking chances with new directors and their 'arty' ideas, studios began to assert control over their investments and a directors 'vision' started to be limited to protect profits.

- **Q**: How is authority, ownership and control represented in the film?
- Q: Was your film made in the beginning, middle or end of the 'New Hollywood' era?
- **Q**: Who had the power, the Studio or the Director?

1980s

1970s