

The Human Mind Through Film
The New Culture War
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We have moved away from the family-centred society we had in the 1950's.

We have moved to a culture that offers us one value over and over again: it promises to give us an escape route from the limits of life. From the consumer utopias depicted in advertising to the doubtful promises of politicians, we are forever being told that we can lift off into another realm if we buy or watch what others want us to.

In effect, what our current culture offers us is **phony transcendence** - the hope of a better, more interesting world, shrink-wrapped in plastic. Like our typical con artist, it promises us everything for nothing while it picks our pockets.

The films chosen for this course try to eschew this shrink-wrapped phony transcendence and deal with basics of reality - the moral and ethical issues so many of us grapple with endlessly or endlessly try to avoid.

The films you will be viewing create a world of certain conventions, decisions about what is “real” on the screen.

For me, these films “represent” the real world, mediate it through images, filters it through cinematic conventions of seeing and understanding.

These cinematic representations create a version of the world in cinematic terms. They interpret our cultural beliefs and assumptions.

Once you understand how films are constructed you can see what the films say about us and our culture.