



American Cinema of the 1970s: Themes and Variations (Screen Decades: American Culture/American Cinema)

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A smug glance at the seventies—the so-called "Me Decade"—unveils a kaleidoscope of big hair, blaring music, and broken politics—all easy targets for satire, cynicism, and ultimately even nostalgia. *American Cinema of the 1970s*, however, looks beyond the strobe lights to reveal how profoundly the seventies have influenced American life and how the films of that decade represent a peak moment in cinema history.

Far from a placid era, the seventies was a decade of social upheavals. Events such as the killing of students at Kent State and Jackson State universities, the Watergate investigations, the legalization of abortion, and the end of the American involvement in Vietnam are only a few among the many landmark occurrences that challenged the foundations of American culture. The director-driven movies of this era reflect this turmoil, experimenting with narrative structures, offering a gallery of scruffy antiheroes, and revising traditional genre conventions.

Bringing together ten original essays, *American Cinema of the 1970s* examines the range of films that marked the decade, including *Jaws*, *Rocky*, *Love Story*, *Shaft*, *Dirty Harry*, *The Godfather*, *Deliverance*, *The Exorcist*, *Shampoo*, *Taxi Driver*, *Star Wars*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Kramer vs. Kramer*, and *Apocalypse Now*.

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