Annotated Catalogue


A Clockwork Orange is set in a futuristic Britain where violence and recreational drugs are at the forefront of teenage rebellion behaviours in which protagonist, Alex DeLarge, is the main instigator. Alex is nihilistic and is involved in an ‘aversion therapy’. This film focuses on his journey and how he cannot handle being in this violence-filled, male dominant world he created. It was the ideal film for my research project as it had different elements and avenues to explore including many subsidiary issues concerning my overall question on male dominance.


The Shining takes a stab at the consumerist orientated bourgeois America, with a family who have moved to a secluded hotel for the winter with Jack Torrance, the father acting as the caretaker. Jack goes through a transformation into a sadistic killer who he believes is his duty to kill his wife and son. The film really focuses on the effects of consumerism and the outcome of Jack’s inability to provide for his family. His violence and male dominance all represent Kubrick’s overriding message in this film.


Full Metal Jacket is a politically motivated film where Kubrick really questions America’s involvement of the war in Vietnam and the training of the US Marine Corps. The film ventures into the barbarous adventures of the army and the depths of intense friendships and the sanity and livelihood of every man involved. These seemed like key features towards my question as this was such a male dominated environment and the camaraderie of the soldiers was explicitly conveying the egotistic violence Kubrick was obsessed with.

This was the first book I studied on Kubrick and was a great starting point. Kubrick seemed to have a preoccupation with psycho/aesthetic drama and the fact most of his characters had a fear of the ‘annihilation of death’ is supported by his films. The exploration of these themes showed me that violence is a key theme of Kubrick’s when attacking social and political conforms and addressing powerful messages which are subtly included through his cinematic techniques as well as his famous ‘Kubrick stare’.


Stanley Kubrick’s work has also been linked to theories from German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche has the idea of a primitive man who character, Alex DeLarge (A Clockwork Orange) is based on. Kubrick stated Alex was a ‘natural man in the state he is born, unlimited, unrepressed’, this suggests he is not constrained to any of the right and wrongs we are exposed to. This led me to question, is this the same state as a transformed Pyle (Full Metal Jacket) went through when being ultimately ‘dehumanized’ by the army?


This article delves into the nihilistic ways of Alex DeLarge, ‘A Clockwork Orange’, and how Kubrick’s films reflect a masculine dominance which can be explained through Kubrick’s idea of a “male universe”. This male domination and the criticism of the bourgeois lifestyle is highlighted in both ‘A Clockwork Orange’ (Item 1) and ‘The Shining’ (Item 2), where they both rebel against the social conforms they are subjected to. Jack Torrance, The Shining, in such a way he is overcome by the media dominated world even quotes ‘Here’s Johnny’ mocking a famous American catchphrase.


This article suggested that in Full Metal Jacket (Item 3) we see an extensive regimented training regime put into place to make these soldiers. However they aren’t made into soldiers, almost psychotic robot killers. ‘They are suitably dehumanised and worthy of being called Marines’, this clear degradation of their mental state has allowed them to become the killers they are. ‘Marine Corps don’t want robots, they want killers. Men without fear.’ This item presented me with the dehumanised man and the effects it had on their mental state which alluded me to the idea of the transformed man also seen in A Clockwork Orange (Item 1) and The Shining (Item 2).

I furthered my research into this violence-orientated unrestricted character, Alex DeLarge (A Clockwork Orange). In Item 4 I touched on the ‘primitive man’ aspect and this article increased my knowledge on this Darwinist approach of Kubrick’s. In A Clockwork Orange it seems ‘joy finds expression only in destruction, action only possible in violence’, this is explicit in Alex DeLarge’s actions and his continual nihilistic attitude. This item showed me how Kubrick reduced life to its primitive source, survival and sexuality, and supported my developments that Kubrick had an obsession with male-egotistic violence and also his Darwinist opinions.


This article really explores all the intricacies of Kubrick’s themes and cinematic techniques. I picked up invaluable information on all the films which have enabled me to come to a thorough well-thought out conclusion. The key focus in this article was aggression and violence which undeniably all three films include, the key horror in the Shining seemed to be ‘Jack’s homicidal rage against his family’ which was solely based, as Pipolo states, on ‘the effects of consumer mentality and media violence’. I discovered Kubrick’s opinions on civilization and how it is based on aggression and violence which is clearly conveyed in his films. I understood how this aggressive drive throughout human being’s is presented in a Freudian (Sigmund Freud) manner; the natural man. This was the last article I studied and it helped me develop and conclude my own ideas and perhaps became the most useful and valuable due to its analytical and contextual content.


I was brought to this site from Viveca Gretton’s article (Item 4), which explored the male universe Kubrick created. This online text supports the idea that Kubrick was obsessed with the gender roles taken on by people and he really found holes in the imperfections of the world’s male inhabitants. ‘Kubrick finds corruption, particularly in males’, this could be the answer to why all three of my focus films are orientated around male protagonists. This helped me discover the intentions of Kubrick and I cemented my suspicions on his ‘male universe’ highlighted in this source and Gretton’s article (Item 4).

On this website it supported what I had found out, it analysed all of my three films and supported this idea of the mechanically dysfunctional protagonist. I understood that Kubrick enjoyed tackling socio-political issues whether it is the constraints of society, the strenuous hardships of war or an abnormality of the mind. It is safe to say all the protagonists are ‘trapped in a maze of his own creation’. This article claimed Kubrick was attacking this male instinct they fill the need to undertake from the pressures and conventions of the American bourgeois lifestyle.

**Item 12:** Male Focus Group.

From my focus group I found key information with regard to my research on all three films on how the audience reacted to important scenes. I wanted to discover how they reacted to scenes that question society which is solely what Kubrick films attempted to do. Whether their male bravado overshadowed their true thoughts or they understood the implications cinema can have on influencing and harnessing emotional response.

**Item 13:** Content Analysis.

I studied Full Metal Jacket and I found that in the opening scene (Drill Sergeant Scene) the Sergeant uses a staggering 44 curse words, this constant onslaught of offensive language sets his personality and what the recruits have enrolled in. I used this example as Kubrick uses dialogue to convey the strength that the Sergeant has and his dominant role. This analysis showed me the attention to detail Kubrick has in his direction.

**Materials Not Selected**

**2001: A Space Odyssey [Motion Picture].**

I was going to choose this as a focus film but after seeing the film and in relation to my question I found that this wasn’t relevant to the key themes that I was going to study and it was much more an exploration of man rather than an insight into male dominance.

**All work no play…Jack Nicholson on the making of The Shining.**

At first I really believed this book would give me an insight into the character depiction as it was from the main protagonist, Jack Nicholson. Unfortunately it was more focused on the relationship between Kubrick and Nicholson and the experiences they endured on the making of the film.
Bibliography


