

<i>To the Teacher</i> .....	v
<i>To the Student</i> .....	vi
<b>Unit 1: History of Movies</b>	
Teacher Buzz.....	1
Movies Buzz.....	2
Activity 1: Photography and Moving Pictures: Ways of Seeing .....	3
Activity 2: Talkies: Ways of Hearing.....	5
Activity 3: Movies and World War II .....	7
Activity 4: The Red Scare and the Blacklist.....	11
Activity 5: The 1950s: Movies versus Television .....	13
Activity 6: Vietnam .....	15
<b>Unit 2: Movies and Society</b>	
Teacher Buzz.....	18
Movies Buzz.....	19
Activity 1: The Hays Commission and Crime .....	20
Activity 2: The Australian Movie Rating System .....	22
Activity 3: Hollywood, Age and Gender.....	24
Activity 4: Growing Up with Disney.....	26
Activity 5: Child Actors and Labour Laws .....	27
Activity 6: Hollywood: How the World Sees America and How America Sees the World? .....	29
Activity 7: Do We See Them?.....	31
<b>Unit 3: Movie as Narrative</b>	
Teacher Buzz.....	32
Movies Buzz.....	33
Activity 1: Narrative Structure .....	34
Activity 2: Plot Devices .....	35
Activity 3: Conflict Resolution and Violence.....	36
Activity 4: Fantasy versus Reality .....	38
Activity 5: Cinematic Elements.....	40
Activity 6: Point of View .....	42

SYDNEY POLLACK WAS A DIRECTOR of popular American movies that included *Out of Africa* and *The Firm*. Talking about moviemaking, Pollack said:

Some filmmakers begin knowing exactly what they want to say and then craft a vehicle that contains that statement. Some are interested in pure escape. Here's the catch. The effectiveness and the success of all our films is determined by exactly the same standards – unfortunately not by the particular validity of their message, but by their ability to engage the concentration and emotions of the audience.

This book asks you to think about and investigate the issues that Pollack mentions: movies as a social or political statement; movies as a type of art; movies and their ability to get your attention and play with your emotions. This investigation will help you to think about how the desire to be creative and the desire to make a lot of money intersect, or collide, in the movie industry. Looking beyond audience appeal (which Pollack says is the most important issue in the movie industry), you will also identify and evaluate the validity of the messages of standard film genres.

Genre means a type of movie. Although many movies are released each year – several hundred in Hollywood, a handful in places like Australia or most European countries, and up to a thousand or so in Bollywood, the Indian film industry – nearly all of them can be categorised into a handful of genres. This is because movies must be marketed to their audiences. And most moviegoers want at least a rough idea of what kind of movie they are going to see before they see it.

As Pollack tells us, most movies are made to be pure entertainment. However, some movies are made to make a statement about something. In addition, many movies that do not have explicit (obvious) statements have implicit (subtle) ones. For example, a movie that shows a male executive and a female secretary is telling us something about gender roles in society.

Despite the emergence of newer entertainment media, movies continue to play an important role in society. The movie theatre industry continues to sell millions of tickets each year, with box office receipts rising from \$5 billion in 1990 to nearly \$8.5 billion in 2001. While the movie industry's focus has always been on selling theatre tickets, and more recently, making money from sales and rentals of movies on DVD and Blu-ray, the industry has also had significant effects on social, ideological and political views in the western world and elsewhere.

The word "movies" has several common synonyms, including motion pictures, cinema and films. Since most of us refer to them as movies, that is what we will call them in this book. In addition, even though only one of the major Hollywood studios, Paramount Pictures, is actually located there today, this book will use the term "Hollywood" to refer to the American film industry. We will also use the term "actor" to describe both male and female performers.

This book is mainly about American films, but the ideas and questions it raises can be used to think about and evaluate Australian films as well.

There are probably several words in this book that you are not familiar with. You will find a glossary at the back of the book.

The objectives of this unit are to help students

- place movies in historical and cultural context
- recognise the role movies play in social and political concerns
- understand that popular themes in movies reflect contemporary issues

### In this Unit ...

**Photography and Moving Pictures: Ways of Seeing** helps students investigate how technology affects humans' perception of their environment.

**Talkies: Ways of Hearing** includes a group exercise in which students explore the significance of sound by attempting to use nonverbal communication to express emotions.

**Movies and World War II** introduces students to the historical use of government sponsored propaganda and has them examine their own willingness to participate in the creation of propaganda.

**The Red Scare and the Blacklist** uses a discussion of McCarthyism in the USA as a backdrop for a series of ethical dilemmas. Students investigate the balance of friendship and citizenship in this activity.

**The 1950s: Movies versus Television** is designed to stimulate students' creativity as they generate content changes and format changes in movies to better capture teenage aesthetics and themes.

**Vietnam** discusses the contrast between western attitudes toward the war in Vietnam and World War II, as well as the adjustment problems many Vietnam veterans experienced upon returning to their home countries. Students are asked to empathise with veterans' reactions to Hollywood's depictions of the war. Students also conduct an interview with a Vietnam veteran regarding their view of movies about the war, and record the veteran's reflections in those interviews. This activity may require a class conversation about the possibly sensitive nature of the interview process.

### The 1950s: Movies versus Television

THE DEVELOPMENT OF commercial television was delayed by World War II. When the war ended in 1945, electronics firms shifted their emphasis from wartime production of military equipment to peacetime production of consumer goods. Television became widely available to consumers in the late 1940s and 1950s. It quickly gained popularity. Television as a mainstream Australian medium began in 1956.

World War II also had an effect on family life. As soldiers and sailors returned home after the war, many were eager to begin families. A housing shortage and the increased availability of cars led to a rapid expansion of suburbs outside many cities.

The movie industry thus faced two challenges. Its audience was moving away from theatres, most of which were in the older inner cities instead of the new suburbs. Of course, a simple solution was to build new theatres in the suburbs. However, existing urban theatres still wanted to attract business.

Another challenge was presented by television. Unlike radio, which offered only sound, television also offered visual images just like movies. The movie industry hoped that television would just be a passing fad. In the meantime, the movie industry knew that it would have to change things.

Review the statistics provided in Unit 2, Activity 3, about the generalised demographic profile of today's frequent moviegoers. This information is important for decisions about the production and exhibition of movies. Teenagers watch less television than most age groups. This is partly because teenagers like to get out of the house and do things like seeing movies. Because of the new popularity of television, fewer older adults and children were going to the movies in the 1950s. As a result, moviemakers focused more attention on topics in which teenagers were interested.

We will bring the problems moviemakers faced fifty years ago forward to today. Imagine that you are a consultant hired by movie producers and theatres to help them get teenagers out of their homes and into movie theatres. You are asked for suggestions on changing both movie formats and content in order to get more teenagers to see movies. On the next page, list and describe two changes you would suggest for each, and explain why. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

**Format (how movies are shown)**

1. First format change: Movies, which today are typically between 90–120 minutes long, should be (circle one)

*Longer      Shorter      Remain the same*

Explain the reason for your answer.

2. Second format change. (Come up with your own.)

*Description:*

*Explanation:*

3. Third format change. (Come up with your own.)

*Description:*

*Explanation:*

**Content (what movies show)**

1. First content change: There should be more movies about Australians and their lives. (circle one)

*Agree      Disagree*

Explain the reason for your answer.

2. Second content change. (Come up with your own.)

*Description:*

*Explanation:*

3. Third content change. (Come up with your own.)

*Description:*

*Explanation:*