Vimeo link for this week's film and **ALL** of Bruce Jackson's and Diane Christian's film introductions and post-film discussions in the virtual BFS

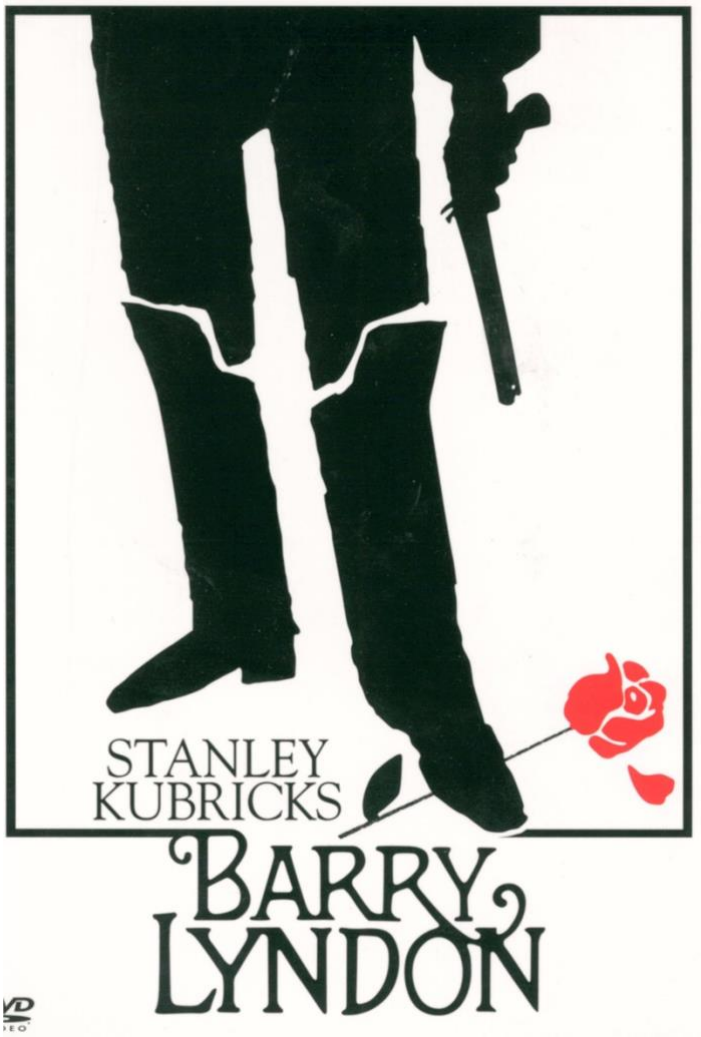
Zoom link for all FALL 2021 BFS Tuesday 7:00 PM post-screening discussions

The film is available for streaming on Amazon Prime. UB email account holders can access it free via the UB Library's Swank Digital Campus portal.

The best source of information on *Barry Lyndon* is Cinephilia & Beyond's posting on the film, "All hail Kubrick's 'Barry Lyndon,' a masterclass in bringing a unique filmmker's in to life." It contains excellent comments and essays, a PDF of the screenplay, Michel Ciment's interview with Kubrick on the film (and an audio of that interview); articles on the cinematography and special lenses; videos on the cinematography, set design, cinematographer John Alcott talking about "Six Kinds of Light"; plus many great photos available nowhere else during the shooting and while Kubrick was editing the film.

Directed by Stanley Kubrick
Writing Credits Stanley Kubrick adapted the screenplay from a novel by William Makepeace Thackeray
Produced by Stanley Kubrick
Cinematography by John Alcott
Film Editing by Tony Lawson
Art Direction by Roy Walker
Costume Design by Milena Canonero and Ulla-Britt Söderlund
Music by Leonard Rosenman

The film won Oscars for Best Cinematography, Best Art Direction-Set Decoration, Best Costume Design, and Best Music, Scoring Original Song Score and/or Adaptation and was nominated for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Writing, Screenplay Adapted From Other Material at the

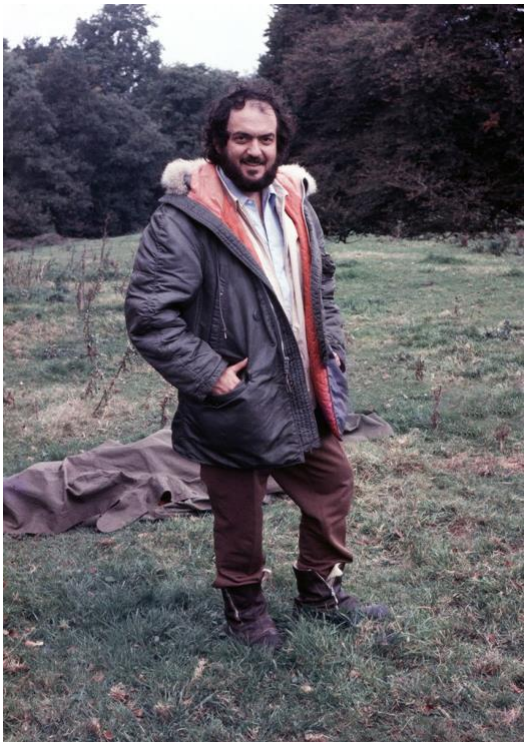


1976 Academy Awards.

Cast
Ryan O'Neal...Barry Lyndon/Redmond Barry/Lt. Jonathan Fakenham/Lazlo Zilagy
Marisa Berenson...Lady Lyndon, Countess of Lyndon, Viscountess of Bullington, Baroness Castle Lyndon of Ireland
Patrick Magee...The Chevalier de Balibari
Hardy Krüger...Capt. Potzdorf
Steven Berkoff...Lord Ludd
Murray Melvin...Rev. Samuel Runt

STANLEY KUBRICK (b. July 26, 1928 in New York City, New York—d. March 7, 1999 (age 70) in Harpenden, Hertfordshire, England, UK) was an American film director, screenwriter, and producer. He is frequently cited as one of the greatest and most influential filmmakers in cinematic history. His films, which are mostly adaptations of novels or short stories, cover a wide range of genres, and are noted for their realism, dark humor, unique cinematography, extensive set designs, and evocative use of music. He taught himself all aspects of film production and directing after graduating from high school. After

working as a photographer for Look magazine in the late 1940s and early 1950s, he began making short films on a shoestring budget, and made his first major Hollywood film, *The Killing**, for United Artists in 1956. This was followed by two collaborations with Kirk Douglas, the war picture *Paths of Glory** ** (1957) and the historical epic *Spartacus* (1960). As he was cementing a reputation as a great innovator in cinematic vision and technique in the 1960s with the tragicomedy of his first Oscar-nominated (Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Writing) *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb** ** (1964) and the aporetic, Oscar-winning (Best Effects) and Oscar-nominated (Best Director and Best Writing) *2001: A Space Odyssey** ** (1968), Kubrick had acquired the rights to Arthur Schnitzel's "Traumnovelle," but it would not begin filming until 1996 in London "under the veil of severe secrecy" (*Cinephilia & Beyond*). The secret production would end up being Kubrick's final film, 1999's *Eyes Wide Shut*.* ** In the intervening years, Kubrick would make several controversial and lauded films. The shocking Anthony Burgess adaptation *A Clockwork Orange** ** (1971) and the epic *Barry Lyndon** ** (1975) were both nominated for Oscars for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Writing. 1980's Stephen King adaptation *The Shining** ** became one of the most revered horror films, generating wild fan theories about the significance of architecture in the film's haunted lodge. These are the other films he directed (16 credits): *Flying Padre** **** (Documentary short) (1951), *Day of the Fight*** *** (Documentary short) (1951), *Fear and Desire*** *** (1953), *The Seafarers**** (Documentary short) (1953), *Killer's Kiss** ** ***(1955), *Lolita** (1962), and *Full Metal Jacket** ** (1987), for which he received his final Best Writing Oscar nomination. He produced and shared the screenwriting credit on most of his films. Kubrick also did much of the "documentary" footage in *Dr. Strangelove*. "A film," Kubrick said, "is—or should be—more like music than like fiction. It should be a progression of moods and feelings. The theme, what's behind the emotion, the meaning, all that comes later." Kubrick was nominated for 12 Academy Awards for best screenplay, director, or picture, but the only one he ever got was posthumously for Special Visual Effects in 2001.



***Writer**
****Producer**
*****Cinematography and Editing**
******Cinematography**

JOHN ALCOTT (1931, London—28 July 1986, Cannes) shot only 19 films, four of them with Kubrick: *The Shining* 1980, *Barry Lyndon* 1975 (for which he won a Best Cinematography Oscar they're still talking about), *A Clockwork Orange* 1971 and the Dawn of Man sequence in *2001: A Space Odyssey* 1968. Some of his other films are *No Way Out* 1987, *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes* 1984, *Under Fire* 1983, *Fort Apache the Bronx* 1981 and *Who Is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe?* 1978.

LEONARD ROSENMAN (b. September 7, 1924, Brooklyn, NY – d. March 4, 2008, Los Angeles, CA) was an American film, television and concert composer with credits in over 130 works, including *East of Eden* (1955), *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), *Edge of the City* (1957), *Fantastic Voyage* (1966), *Stranger on the Run* (1967), *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (1970), *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1973), *The Cat Creature* (1973), *Barry Lyndon* (1975; Academy Award), *Sybil* (1976; Emmy Award), *Bound for Glory* (1976; Academy Award), *The Possessed* (1977), *The Lord of the Rings* (1978), *The Jazz Singer* (1980), *Miss Lonelyhearts* (1983), *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* (1986), and *RoboCop 2* (1990).

RYAN O'NEIL (20 April 1941, Los Angeles) came to fame on the prime-time soap opera "Peyton Place" (1964-69). He delivered an Oscar-nominated performance in the terminally-gooey *Love Story* 1970. He's been in about 40 movies, none of them as interesting as *Barry Lyndon*, which took advantage of his pretty-boy looks and emotional vapidity. He named his son with Farah Fawcett, with whom he lived from 1980 through1997, Redmond, after his character in Kubrick's film.

MARISA BERENSON (b. February 15, 1947 in New York City, New York) is an American actress (84 credits) and model. She appeared on the front covers of *Vogue* and *Time*, and won the National Board of Review Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role as Natalia Landauer in the 1972 film *Cabaret*. The role also earned her Golden Globe and BAFTA Award nominations. Her other film appearances include *Death in Venice* (1971), *Barry Lyndon* (1975), *S.O.B.* (1981) and *I Am Love* (2009). She has also had many television appearances in memorable series, such as *Who's The Boss?* (1986) and *Murder, She Wrote* (1992). Her most recent roles have been in films and television series, such as *Unforgettable* and *The Bay* (in pre-production), *Belle enfant* (filming), *Juliette dans son*

bain (TV Movie in post-production), and *Mongeville* (2020 TV Series).

PATRICK MAGEE (b. March 31, 1922 in Armagh, Northern Ireland, UK—d. August 14, 1982 (age 60) in Fulham, London, England, UK) was a Northern Irish actor and director of stage and screen, with a very distinctive voice. He was known for his collaborations with Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter, as well as creating the role of the Marquis de Sade in the original stage and screen productions of *Marat/Sade* (1967). He also appeared in numerous horror films and in two Stanley Kubrick films, *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and *Barry Lyndon* (1975). These are some of his other performances: *The Green Man* (1956), *The Concrete Jungle* (1960), *Dementia 13* (1963), *The Servant* (1963), *Zulu* (1964), *Seance on a Wet Afternoon* (1964), *The Masque of the Red Death* (1964), *The Birthday Party* (1968), *King Lear* (1970), *Young Winston* (1972), *Pope Joan* (1972), *Luther* (1974), *Galileo* (1975), *Telefon* (1977), *Oresteia* (1979, TV Mini Series), *The Brontë Sisters* (1979), *Rough Cut* (1980), *Sir Henry at Rawlinson End* (1980), *The Sleep of Death* (1980), *Hawk the Slayer* (1980), *Chariots of Fire* (1981), *The Monster Club* (1981), and *The Black Cat* (1956).

HARDY KRÜGER (b. April 12, 1928, in Wedding, Berlin, Germany) is a German actor and author, who appeared in more than 60 films since 1944. Krüger mostly retired from acting in the late 1980s and is today a writer. He has published 16 books since 1970, of which four have been translated into English. He has also directed a number of European television documentaries, showing him travelling around the world. These are some of his film and television appearances: *Young Eagles* (1944), *One Must Be Handsome* (1951), *The Moon Is Blue* (1953), *Ich und Du* (1953), *The Last Summer* (1954), *Alibi* (1955), *Liane, Jungle Goddess* (1956), *Confess, Dr. Corda* (1958), *Bachelor of Hearts* (1958), *Taxi for Tobruk* (1961), *Hatari!* (1962), *Sundays and Cybèle* (1962), *The Uninhibited* (1965), *The Flight of the Phoenix* (1965), *The Defector* (1966), *The Lady of Monza* (1969), *The Secret of Santa Vittoria* (1969), *The Red Tent* (1969), *What the Peeper Saw* (1972), *The Loner* (1973), *Paper Tiger* (1975), *Barry Lyndon* (1975), *The Spy Who Never Was* (1976), *À chacun son enfer* (1977), *A Bridge Too Far* (1977), *The Wild Geese* (1978), *Wrong Is Right* (1982), *The Inside Man* (1984), and *War and Remembrance* (1988-1989, TV Miniseries).

MURRAY MELVIN (b. 10 August 1932, St. Pancras, London, England) is an English author, actor (102 credits) and director, best known for his acting work with Joan Littlewood, Ken Russell and Stanley Kubrick. He has acted in films and television series, such as: *Armchair Theatre* (1959, TV Series), *The Concrete Jungle* (1960), *The Risk* (1960), *The Avengers* (1961, TV Series), *A Taste of Honey* (1961), *Alfie* (1966), *The Fixer* (1968), *The Devils* (1971), *The Boy Friend* (1971), *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* (1972), *Gawain and the Green Knight* (1973), *Lisztom*ania (1975), *Barry Lyndon* (1975), *The Bawdy Adventures of Tom Jones* (1976), *Joseph Andrews* (1977), *Nutcracker* (1982), *Sacred Hearts* (1984), *Testimony* (1987), *Little Dorrit* (1987), *The Krays* (1990), *The Fool* (1990), *As You Like It* (1992), *Alice in Wonderland* (1999, TV Movie), *The Emperor's New Clothes* (2001), *The Phantom of the Opera* (2004), *Midsomer Murders* (2012, TV Series), *The Lost City of Z* (2016), *Starhunter Transformation* (2017, TV Miniseries).

Geoffrey Macnab: "Marisa Berenson on the making of Barry Lyndon: Kubrick wasn't a 'difficult ogre - he was a perfectionist'" (*The Independent, 2016*).

Interviewed in the bar of an upmarket Piccadilly hotel, Marisa Berenson, now 69, cuts the same elegant figure she did when playing Lady Lyndon in Stanley Kubrick's 1975 period drama movie *Barry Lyndon*. She is in London over the summer, appearing as Lady Capulet in the Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company production of *Romeo And Juliet*. Her account of the making of *Barry Lyndon* reveals that familiar mix of affection, awe and exasperation that so many of Kubrick's collaborators felt about working with him. It's a fascinating, comical and very embroiled story, involving everyone from Peter Sellers to the IRA.

"He [Kubrick] just called me up one day," Berenson recalls. The director had been given her number by a mutual friend, Stanley Donen (director of *Singin' In The Rain*). He thought that Berenson was German because of her accent in *Cabaret*. "Oh, no," Donen had told him. "I've known her since she was a little girl. She's not at all German. She speaks perfect English."

Berenson was intrigued to receive the phone call from Kubrick. She had no idea what he looked like. (The American director was reclusive and rarely photographed.) "When he called, I was sick in bed with pneumonia," she says. "I had this very high fever. I didn't say much. He just told me wanted me to play this English countess in a film of a Thackeray novel."

Berenson didn't actually meet her director until six months later. In the intervening period, she had read the Thackeray novel and had been struck by the fact that Lady

Lyndon didn't feature especially prominently. Not that she had second thoughts about taking the role. As she puts it, "when a great director says to you 'I want you to do a part', you just say yes. You know that it is going to have his vision and that it will be extraordinary one way or the other."

Eventually, Berenson went to visit Kubrick at his home outside London. She had her costume fittings and tried on her wigs. Kubrick complimented her on the way she did her make-up but, otherwise, gave her few instructions about how she should play the role.

"I liked him [Kubrick] very much. He had a lot of dry humour. Contrary to what people think – they have this image of Stanley as this difficult ogre – he wasn't at all. He was a perfectionist but every great director I've worked with has been a perfectionist. You have to be to make extraordinary films."

Kubrick, she adds, was "a very cosy man", who loved his kids, his dogs and his garden. He played the piano. He liked to dance. He adored his wife. It was just than when it came to movies, he was obsessive, "bulimic for information," as she puts it, "wanting to know everything about everything". He was also determinedly eccentric, driving very slowly, wearing a helmet in his bullet proof car and only leaving his home counties base when there was no other choice.

With extreme reluctance, to save money, Kubrick had agreed to make *Barry Lyndon* in Ireland.

For the first three months of shooting, Berenson didn't appear in a single scene. She was on call all the time but wasn't used once. The rain was incessant. "I tell you, I didn't do one day of shooting in Ireland and I was there for three months," the actress exclaims.

Her friend Peter Sellers arranged for her to live in the wing of an old Irish castle "to get in the mood of the character". The place was run down with bad electricity and no heating. Berenson was living there on her own, trying to keep herself calm by meditating and doing yoga even as she shivered. She asked Kubrick if she could go home for Christmas. "No," came the reply. "I might need you tomorrow."

Eventually, Kubrick closed down the production and left for London in the middle of the night. No one knew why, although the speculation was that there had been threats from the IRA. The director planned to start shooting again in England. It was a decision that drove his production designer Ken Adam to a nervous breakdown.

"Poor Ken had to go through the whole process of all the castles, the permissions, the sets ... it was a very complicated movie to do, and he had spent a year doing that in Ireland already."

As a highly paid model, Berenson was accustomed to complicated photo shoots but nothing had prepared her for Kubrick's way or working – in particular, his decision to use thousands of candles to light the film rather than electricity. (This was one of his ways of ensuring period authenticity.)

"The lighting was so beautiful in that film. You can tell when you're being lit if the lighting is good or not. We were shooting in these big, cold castles with candles burning - so they had to be changed. He was shooting with this very sensitive lens that shot in the dark. NASA had the other one. I couldn't really move very much because otherwise you would go out of focus. It was very constricting but for my part, Lady Lyndon was a repressed woman anyway, it was perfect."

Kubrick shot multiple takes of every scene – a source of some discomfort for Berenson in a famous scene in which she is shown in a bath with her courtiers around her. Inevitably, the water grew cold. Kubrick allowed it to be replaced with hot water but insisted its level stayed exactly the same.

The film was supposed to take six months to shoot but ended up taking over a year. "I just went into a bubble," Berenson recalls. "I didn't see the light. I didn't see anything or anyone until I had finished the movie."

Her relationship with her co-star Ryan O'Neal (who plays Redmond Barry, the Irish chancer who married Lady Lyndon for her wealth) seems to have been ambivalent. "He was OK," she says guardedly of the hell-raising actor but acknowledges that, like Kubrick, O'Neal had a good sense of humour. "He would always crack jokes and try to make me laugh in the scenes when I had to be crying and dramatic which I was always upset about."

True to his reputation, Kubrick was very secretive about the shooting of the movie. When he finally allowed senior Warner Bros executives to see 20 minutes of the material, he insisted on them spending four days in a hotel. "They weren't allowed to do anything. He didn't want them jet-lagged, he didn't want them tired."

When shooting was finally completed, O'Neal annoyed Kubrick by making critical remarks about the movie in the press. (He may have been jealous that Berenson, not him, had appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine, billed as Kubrick's latest muse in the director's

"grandest gamble".) It was therefore left to Berenson to go on a world publicity tour on her own.

On its initial release, *Barry Lyndon* was respectfully received and was admired for its technical excellence, but it certainly wasn't loved by the critics. Some felt it was too picturesque, "the motion picture equivalent of one of those very large, very expensive, very elegant and very dull books that exist solely to be seen on coffee tables", as one wrote. In the intervening years, it has been re-evaluated and is now seen as one of its director's supreme achievements.

For Berenson, for better or worse, the film continues to define her career. "This film, there is not a day that goes by without someone talking about it. It is really the film that has marked me the most. Everybody associates me with *Barry Lyndon*."

Kubrick made huge demands on his leading actress but, once she finally came up for air, the rewards for her were obvious. "Getting back into the world after *Barry Lyndon* was a strange thing," she reflects. "I was cut off from everything for such a long time. Stanley would sometimes see me becoming a bit melancholy because I hadn't gone home and he would say, 'you have no idea what this film is going to do for you'."

Michel Ciment: "Kubrick on 'Barry Lyndon'" (*Cinephilia & Beyond*)

The following interview with Stanley Kubrick is excerpted from the book 'Kubrick' by Michel Ciment. It was conducted upon the release of *Barry Lyndon* in 1975 and published in a partial form at the time. In 1981 Stanley Kubrick revised and approved the complete text of the interview for the English edition of Ciment's book on his films.

You have given almost no interviews on *Barry Lyndon*. Does this decision relate to this film particularly, or is it because you are reluctant to speak about your work?

I suppose my excuse is that the picture was ready only a few weeks before it opened and I really had no time to do any interviews. But if I'm to be completely honest, it's probably due more to the fact that I don't like doing interviews. There is always the problem of being misquoted or, what's even worse, of being quoted exactly, and having to see what you've said in print. Then there are the mandatory—"How did you get along with actor X, Y or Z?"—"Who really thought of good idea A, B or C?" I think Nabokov may have had the right approach to interviews. He would only agree to write down the answers and then send them on to the interviewer who would then write the questions.

Do you feel that *Barry Lyndon* is a more secret film, more difficult to talk about?

Not really. I've always found it difficult to talk about any of my films. What I generally manage to do is to discuss the background information connected with the story, or perhaps some of the interesting facts which might be associated with it. This approach often allows me to avoid the "What does it mean? Why did you do it?" questions. For example, with *Dr. Strangelove* I could talk about the spectrum of bizarre ideas connected with the possibilities of accidental or unintentional warfare. *2001: A Space Odyssey* allowed speculation about ultra-intelligent computers, life in the universe, and a whole range of science-fiction ideas. *A Clockwork Orange* involved law and order, criminal violence, authority versus freedom, etc. With *Barry Lyndon* you haven't got these topical issues to talk around, so I suppose that does make it a bit more difficult.

Your last three films were set in the future. What led you to make an historical film?

I can't honestly say what led me to make any of my films. The best I can do is to say I just fell in love with the stories. Going beyond that is a bit like trying to explain why you fell in love with your wife: she's intelligent, has brown eyes, a good figure. Have you really said anything? Since I am currently going through the process of trying to decide what film to make next, I realize just how uncontrollable is the business of finding a story, and how much it depends on chance and spontaneous reaction. You can say a lot of "architectural" things about what a film story should have: a strong plot, interesting characters, possibilities for cinematic development, good opportunities for the actors to display emotion, and the presentation of its thematic ideas truthfully and intelligently. But, of course, that still doesn't really explain why you finally chose something, nor does it lead you to a story. You can only say that you probably wouldn't choose a story that doesn't have most of those qualities.

Since you are completely free in your choice of story material, how did you come to pick up a book by Thackeray, almost forgotten and hardly republished since the nineteenth century?

I have had a complete set of Thackeray sitting on my bookshelf at home for years, and I had to read several of his novels before reading Barry Lyndon. At one time, Vanity Fair interested me as a possible film but, in the end, I decided the story could not be successfully compressed into the relatively short time-span of a feature film. This problem of length, by the way, is now wonderfully

accommodated for by the television miniseries which, with its ten-to twelve-hour length, pressed on consecutive nights, has created a completely different dramatic form. Anyway, as soon as I read *Barry Lyndon* I became very excited about it. I loved the story and the characters, and it seemed possible to make the transition from novel to film without destroying it in the process. It also offered the opportunity to do one of the things that movies can do better than any other art form, and that is to present historical subject matter. Description is not one of the things that novels do best but it is something that movies do effortlessly, at least with respect to the effort required of the audience. This is equally true for science-fiction and fantasy, which offer visual challenges and possibilities you don't find in contemporary stories.

How did you come to adopt a third-person commentary instead of the first-person narrative which is found in the book?

I believe Thackeray used Redmond Barry to tell his own story in a deliberately distorted way because it made it more interesting. Instead of the omniscient author, Thackeray used the imperfect observer, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the dishonest observer, thus allowing the reader to judge for himself, with little difficulty, the probable truth in Redmond Barry's view of his life. This technique worked extremely well in the novel but, of course, in a film you have objective reality in front of you all of the time, so the effect of Thackeray's first-person story-teller could not be repeated on the screen. It might have worked as comedy by the juxtaposition of Barry's version of the truth with the reality on the screen, but I don't think that Barry Lyndon should have been done as a comedy.

You didn't think of having no commentary?

There is too much story to tell. A voice-over spares you the cumbersome business of telling the necessary facts of the story through expositional dialogue scenes which can become very tiresome and frequently unconvincing: "Curse the blasted storm that's wrecked our blessed ship!" Voice-over, on the other hand, is a perfectly legitimate and economical way of conveying story information which does not need dramatic weight and which would otherwise be too bulky to dramatize.

But you use it in other way—to cool down the emotion of a scene, and to anticipate the story. For instance, just after the meeting with the German peasant girl—a very moving scene—the voice-over compares her to a town having been often conquered by siege.

In the scene that you're referring to, the voice-over works as an ironic counterpoint to what you see portrayed by the actors on the screen. This is only a minor sequence in the story and has to be presented with economy. Barry is tender and romantic with the girl but all he really wants is to get her into bed. The girl is lonely and Barry is attractive and attentive. If you think about it, it isn't likely that he is the only soldier she has brought home while her husband has been away to the wars. You could have had Barry give signals to the audience, through his performance, indicating that he is really insincere and opportunistic, but this would be unreal. When we try to deceive we are as convincing as we can be, aren't we? The film's commentary also serves another purpose, but this time in much the same manner it did in the novel. The story has many twists and turns, and Thackeray uses Barry to give you hints in advance of most of the important plot developments, thus lessening the risk of their seeming contrived.

When he is going to meet the Chevalier Balibari, the commentary anticipates the emotions we are about to see, thus possibly lessening their effect.

Barry Lyndon is a story which does not depend upon surprise. What is important is not what is going to happen, but how it will happen. I think Thackeray trades off the advantage of surprise to gain a greater sense of inevitability and a better integration of what might otherwise seem melodramatic or contrived. In the scene you refer to where Barry meets the Chevalier, the film's voice-over establishes the necessary groundwork for the important new relationship which is rapidly to develop between the two men. By talking about Barry's loneliness being so far from home, his sense of isolation as an exile, and his joy at meeting a fellow countryman in a foreign land, the commentary prepares the way for the scenes which are quickly to follow showing his close attachment to the Chevalier. Another place in the story where I think this technique works particularly well is where we are told that Barry's young son, Bryan, is going to die at the same time we watch the two of them playing happily together. In this case, I think the commentary creates the same dramatic effect as, for example, the knowledge that the Titanic is doomed while you watch the carefree scenes of preparation and departure. These early scenes would be inexplicably dull if you didn't know about the ship's appointment with the iceberg. Being told in advance of the impending disaster gives away surprise but creates suspense.

There is very little introspection in the film. Barry is open about his feelings at the beginning of the film, but then he becomes less so.

At the beginning of the story, Barry has more people

around him to whom he can express his feelings. As the story progresses, and particularly after his marriage, he becomes more and more isolated. There is finally no one who loves him, or with whom he can talk freely, with the possible exception of his young son, who is too young to be of much help. At the same time I don't think that the lack of introspective dialogue scenes are any loss to the story. Barry's feelings are there to be seen as he reacts to the increasingly difficult circumstances of his life. I think this is equally true for the other characters in the story. In any event, scenes of people talking about themselves are often very dull.

In contrast to films which are preoccupied with analyzing the psychology of the characters, yours tend to maintain a mystery around them. Reverend Runt, for instance, is a very opaque person. You don't know exactly what his motivations are.

But you know a lot about Reverend Runt, certainly all that is necessary. He dislikes Barry. He is secretly in love with Lady Lyndon, in his own prim, repressed, little way. His little smile of triumph, in the scene in the coach, near the end of the film, tells you all you need to know regarding the way he feels about Barry's misfortune, and the way things have worked out. You certainly don't have the time in a film to develop the motivations of minor characters.

Lady Lyndon is even more opaque.

Thackeray doesn't tell you a great deal about her in the novel. I found that very strange. He doesn't give you a lot to go on. There are, in fact, very few dialogue scenes with her in the book. Perhaps he meant her to be something of a mystery. But the film gives you a sufficient understanding of her anyway.

You made important changes in your adaptation, such as the invention of the last duel, and the ending itself.

Yes, I did, but I was satisfied that they were consistent with the spirit of the novel and brought the story to about the same place the novel did, but in less time. In the book, Barry is pensioned off by Lady Lyndon. Lord Bullingdon, having been believed dead, returns from America. He finds Barry and gives him a beating. Barry, tended by his mother, subsequently dies in prison, a drunk. This, and everything that went along with it in the novel to make it credible would have taken too much time on the screen. In the film, Bullingdon gets his revenge and Barry is totally defeated, destined, one can assume, for a fate not unlike that which awaited him in the novel.

And the scene of the two homosexuals in the lake was not in the book either.

The problem here was how to get Barry out of the British Army. The section of the book dealing with this is also fairly lengthy and complicated. The function of the scene between the two gay officers was to provide a simpler way for Barry to escape. Again, it leads to the same end result as the novel but by a different route. Barry steals the papers and uniform of a British officer which allow him to make his way to freedom. Since the scene is purely expositional, the comic situation helps to mask your intentions.

Were you aware of the multiple echoes that are found in the film: flogging in the army, flogging at home, the duels, etc., and the narrative structure resembling that of *A Clockwork Orange*? Does this geometrical pattern attract you?

The narrative symmetry arose primarily out of the needs of telling the story rather than as part of a conscious design. The artistic process you go through in making a film is as much a matter of discovery as it is the execution of a plan. Your first responsibility in writing a screenplay is to pay the closest possible attention to the author's ideas and make sure you really understand what he has written and why he has written it. I know this sounds pretty obvious but you'd be surprised how often this is not done. There is a tendency for the screenplay writer to be "creative" too quickly. The next thing is to make sure that the story survives the selection and compression which has to occur in order to tell it in a maximum of three hours, and preferably two. This phase usually seals the fate of most major novels, which really need the large canvas upon which they are presented.

In the first part of *A Clockwork Orange*, we were against Alex. In the second part, we were on his side. In this film, the attraction/repulsion feeling towards Barry is present throughout.

Thackeray referred to it as "a novel without a hero." Barry is naive and uneducated. He is driven by a relentless ambition for wealth and social position. This proves to be an unfortunate combination of qualities which eventually lead to great misfortune and unhappiness for himself and those around him. Your feelings about Barry are mixed but he has charm and courage, and it is impossible not to like him despite his vanity, his insensitivity and his weaknesses. He is a very real character who is neither a conventional hero nor a conventional villain.

The feeling that we have at the end is one of utter waste.

Perhaps more a sense of tragedy, and because of this the story can assimilate the twists and turns of the plot without becoming melodrama. Melodrama uses all the problems of the world, and the difficulties and disasters which befall

the characters, to demonstrate that the world is, after all, a benevolent and just place.

The last sentence which says that all the characters are now equal can be taken as a nihilistic or religious statement. From your films, one has the feeling that you are a nihilist who would like to believe.
I think you'll find that it is merely an ironic postscript taken from the novel. Its meaning seems quite clear to me and, as far as I'm concerned, it has nothing to do with nihilism or religion.

One has the feeling in your films that the world is in a constant state of war. The apes are fighting in *2001*. There is fighting, too, in *Paths Of Glory*, and *Dr. Strangelove*. In *Barry Lyndon*, you have a war in the first part, and then in the second part we find the home is a battleground, too.
Drama is conflict, and violent conflict does not find its exclusive domain in my films. Nor is it uncommon for a film to be built around a situation where violent conflict is the driving force. With respect to *Barry Lyndon*, after his successful struggle to achieve wealth and social position, Barry proves to be badly unsuited to this role. He has clawed his way into a gilded cage, and once inside his life goes really bad. The violent conflicts which subsequently arise come inevitably as a result of the characters and their relationships. Barry's early conflicts carry him forth into life and they bring him adventure and happiness, but those in later life lead only to pain and eventually to tragedy.

In many ways, the film reminds us of silent movies. I am thinking particularly of the seduction of Lady Lyndon by Barry at the gambling table.
That's good. I think that silent films got a lot more things right than talkies. Barry and Lady Lyndon sit at the gaming table and exchange lingering looks. They do not say a word. Lady Lyndon goes out on the balcony for some air. Barry follows her outside. They gaze longingly into each other's eyes and kiss. Still not a word is spoken. It's very romantic, but at the same time, I think it suggests the empty attraction they have for each other that is to disappear as quickly as it arose. It sets the stage for everything that is to follow in their relationship. The actors, the images and the Schubert worked well together, I think.

Did you have Schubert's Trio in mind while preparing and shooting this particular scene?
No, I decided on it while we were editing. Initially, I thought it was right to use only eighteenth-century music. But sometimes you can make ground-rules for yourself which prove unnecessary and counter-productive. I think I must have listened to every LP you can buy of eighteenth-century music. One of the problems which soon became apparent is that there are no tragic love-themes in eighteenth-century music. So eventually I decided to use Schubert's Trio in E Flat, Opus 100, written in 1828. It's a magnificent piece of music and it has just the right restrained balance between the tragic and the romantic without getting into the headier stuff of later Romanticism.

You also cheated in another way by having Leonard Rosenman orchestrate Handel's Sarabande in a more dramatic style than you would find in eighteenth-century composition.
This arose from another problem about eighteenth-century music—it isn't very dramatic, either. I first came across the Handel theme played on a guitar and, strangely enough, it made me think of Ennio Morricone. I think it worked very well in the film, and the very simple orchestration kept it from sounding out of place.

It also accompanies the last duel—not present in the novel—which is one of the most striking scenes in the film and is set in a dovecote.
The setting was a tithe barn which also happened to have a lot of pigeons resting in the rafters. We've seen many duels before in films, and I wanted to find a different and interesting way to present the scene. The sound of the pigeons added something to this, and, if it were a comedy, we could have had further evidence of the pigeons. Anyway, you tend to expect movie duels to be fought outdoors, possibly in a misty grove of trees at dawn. I thought the idea of placing the duel in a barn gave it an interesting difference. This idea came quite by accident when one of the location scouts returned with some photographs of the barn. I think it was Joyce who observed that accidents are the portals to discovery. Well, that's certainly true in making films. And perhaps in much the same way, there is an aspect of film-making which can be compared to a sporting contest. You can start with a game plan but depending on where the ball bounces and where the other side happens to be, opportunities and problems arise which can only be effectively dealt with at that very moment.

In *2001: A Space Odyssey*, for example, there seemed no clever way for HAL to learn that the two astronauts distrusted him and were planning to disconnect his brain. It would have been irritatingly careless of them to talk aloud, knowing that HAL would hear and understand them. Then the perfect solution presented itself from the actual physical layout of the space pod in the pod bay. The two men went into the pod and turned off every switch to make them safe from HAL's microphones. They

sat in the pod facing each other and in the center of the shot, visible through the sound-proof glass port, you could plainly see the red glow of HAL's bug-eye lens, some fifteen feet away. What the conspirators didn't think of was that HAL would be able to read their lips.

Did you find it more constricting, less free, making an historical film where we all have precise conceptions of a period? Was it more of a challenge?
No, because at least you know what everything looked like. In *2001: A Space Odyssey* everything had to be designed. But neither type of film is easy to do. In historical and futuristic films, there is an inverse relationship between the ease the audience has taking in at a glance the sets, costumes and decor, and the film-maker's problems in creating it. When everything you see has to be designed and constructed, you greatly increase the cost of the film, add tremendously to all the normal problems of film-making, making it virtually impossible to have the flexibility of last-minute changes which you can manage in a contemporary film.

You are well-known for the thoroughness with which you accumulate information and do research when you work on a project. Is it for you the thrill of being a reporter or a detective?
I suppose you could say it is a bit like being a detective. On *Barry Lyndon*, I accumulated a very large picture file of drawings and paintings taken from art books. These pictures served as the reference for everything we needed to make—clothes, furniture, hand props, architecture, vehicles, etc. Unfortunately, the pictures would have been too awkward to use while they were still in the books, and I'm afraid we finally had very guiltily to tear up a lot of beautiful art books. They were all, fortunately, still in print which made it seem a little less sinful. Good research is an absolute necessity and I enjoy doing it. You have an important reason to study a subject in much greater depth than you would ever have done otherwise, and then you have the satisfaction of putting the knowledge to immediate good use. The designs for the clothes were all copied from drawings and paintings of the period. None of them were designed in the normal sense. This is the best way, in my opinion, to make historical costumes. It doesn't seem sensible to have a designer interpret—say—the eighteenth century, using the same picture sources from which you could faithfully copy the clothes. Neither is there much point sketching the costumes again when they are already beautifully represented in the paintings and drawings of the period. What is very important is to get some actual clothes of the period to learn how they were originally made. To get them to look right, you really have to make them the same way. Consider also the problem of taste in designing clothes, even for today. Only a handful of designers seem to have a sense of what is striking and beautiful. How can a designer, however brilliant, have a feeling for the clothes of another period which is equal to that of the people and the designers of the period itself, as recorded in their pictures? I spent a year preparing Barry Lyndon before the shooting began and I think this time was very well spent. The starting point and sine qua non of any historical or futuristic story is to make you believe what you see.

The danger in an historical film is that you lose yourself in details, and become decorative.
The danger connected with any multi-faceted problem is that you might pay too much attention to some of the problems to the detriment of others, but I am very conscious of this and I make sure I don't do that.

Why do you prefer natural lighting?
Because it's the way we see things. I have always tried to light my films to simulate natural light; in the daytime using the windows actually to light the set, and in night scenes the practical lights you see in the set. This approach has its problems when you can use bright electric light sources, but when candelabras and oil lamps are the brightest light sources which can be in the set, the difficulties are vastly increased. Prior to *Barry Lyndon*, the problem has never been properly solved. Even if the director and cameraman had the desire to light with practical light sources, the film and the lenses were not fast enough to get an exposure. A 35mm movie camera shutter exposes at about 1/50 of a second, and a useable exposure was only possible with a lens at least 100% faster than any which had ever been used on a movie camera. Fortunately, I found just such a lens, one of a group of ten which Zeiss had specially manufactured for NASA satellite photography. The lens had a speed of fO.7, and it was 100% faster than the fastest movie lens. A lot of work still had to be done to it and to the camera to make it useable. For one thing, the rear element of the lens had to be 2.5mm away from the film plane, requiring special modification to the rotating camera shutter. But with this lens it was now possible to shoot in light conditions so dim that it was difficult to read. For the day interior scenes, we used either the real daylight from the windows, or simulated daylight by banking lights outside the windows and diffusing them with tracing paper taped on the glass. In addition to the very beautiful lighting you can achieve this way, it is also a very practical way to work. You don't have to worry about shooting into your lighting equipment. All your lighting is outside the window behind tracing paper, and if you shoot towards the window you get a very beautiful and realistic flare effect.

How did you decide on Ryan O'Neal?
He was the best actor for the part. He looked right and I

was confident that he possessed much greater acting ability than he had been allowed to show in many of the films he had previously done. In retrospect, I think my confidence in him was fully justified by his performance, and I still can't think of anyone who would have been better for the part. The personal qualities of an actor, as they relate to the role, are almost as important as his ability, and other actors, say, like Al Pacino, Jack Nicholson or Dustin Hoffman, just to name a few who are great actors, would nevertheless have been wrong to play Barry Lyndon. I liked Ryan and we got along very well together. In this regard the only difficulties I have ever had with actors happened when their acting technique wasn't good enough to do something you asked of them. One way an actor deals with this difficulty is to invent a lot of excuses that have nothing to do with the real problem. This was very well represented in Truffaut's Day For Night when Valentina Cortese, the star of the film within the film, hadn't bothered to learn her lines and claimed her dialogue fluffs were due to the confusion created by the script girl playing a bit part in the scene.

How do you explain some of the misunderstandings about the film by the American press and the English press?

The American press was predominantly enthusiastic about the film, and Time magazine ran a cover story about it. The international press was even more enthusiastic. It is true that the English press was badly split. But from the very beginning, all of my films have divided the critics. Some have thought them wonderful, and others have found very little good to say. But subsequent critical opinion has always resulted in a very remarkable shift to the favorable. In one instance, the same critic who originally rapped the film has several years later put it on an all-time best list. But, of course, the lasting and ultimately most important reputation of a film is not based on reviews, but on what, if anything, people say about it over the years, and on how much affection for it they have.

You are an innovator, but at the same time you are very conscious of tradition.

I try to be, anyway. I think that one of the problems with twentieth-century art is its preoccupation with subjectivity and originality at the expense of everything else. This has been especially true in painting and music. Though initially stimulating, this soon impeded the full development of any particular style, and rewarded uninteresting and sterile originality. At the same time, it is very sad to say, films have had the opposite problem—they have consistently tried to formalize and repeat success, and they have clung to a form and style introduced in their infancy. The sure thing is what everone wants, and originality is not a nice word in this context. This is true despite the repeated example that nothing is as dangerous as a sure thing.

You have abandoned original film music in your last three films.

Exclude a pop music score from what I am about to say. However good our best film composers may be, they are not a Beethoven, a Mozart or a Brahms. Why use music which is less good when there is such a multitude of great orchestral music available from the past and from our own time? When you're editing a film, it's very helpful to be able to try out different pieces of music to see how they work with the scene. This is not at all an uncommon practice. Well, with a little more care and thought, these temporary music tracks can become the final score. When I had completed the editing of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, I had laid in temporary music tracks for almost all of the music which was eventually used in the film. Then, in the normal way, I engaged the services of a distinguished film composer to write the score. Although he and I went over the picture very carefully, and he listened to these temporary tracks (Strauss, Ligeti, Khatchaturian) and agreed that they worked fine and would serve as a guide to the musical objectives of each sequence he, nevertheless, wrote and recorded a score which could not have been more alien to the music we had listened to, and much more serious than that, a score which, in my opinion, was completely inadequate for the film. With the premiere looming up, I had no time left even to think about another score being written, and had I not been able to use the music I had already selected for the temporary tracks I don't know what I would have done. The composer's agent phoned Robert O'Brien, the then head of MGM, to warn him that if I didn't use his client's score the film would not make its premiere date. But in that instance, as in all others, O'Brien trusted my judgment. He is a wonderful man, and one of the very few film bosses able to inspire genuine loyalty and affection from his film-makers.

Why did you choose to have only one flashback in the film: the child falling from the horse?

I didn't want to spend the time which would have been required to show the entire story action of young Bryan sneaking away from the house, taking the horse, falling, being found, etc. Nor did I want to learn about the accident solely through the dialogue scene in which the farm workers, carrying the injured boy, tell Barry. Putting the

flashback fragment in the middle of the dialogue scene seemed to be the right thing to do.

Are your camera movements planned before?
Very rarely. I think there is virtually no point putting camera instructions into a screenplay, and only if some really important camera idea occurs to me, do I write it down. When you rehearse a scene, it is usually best not to think about the camera at all. If you do, I have found that it invariably interferes with the fullest exploration of the ideas of the scene. When, at last, something happens which you know is worth filming, that is the time to decide how to shoot it. It is almost but not quite true to say that when something really exciting and worthwhile is happening, it doesn't matter how you shoot it. In any event, it never takes me long to decide on set-ups, lighting or camera movements. The visual part of film making has always come easiest to me, and that is why I am careful to subordinate it to the story and the performances.

Do you like writing alone or would you like to work with a script writer?
I enjoy working with someone I find stimulating. One of the most fruitful and enjoyable collaborations I have had was with Arthur C. Clarke in writing the story of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. One of the paradoxes of movie writing is that, with a few notable exceptions, writers who can really write are not interested in working on film scripts. They quite correctly regard their important work as being done for publication. I wrote the screenplay for *Barry Lyndon* alone. The first draft took three or four months but, as with all my films, the subsequent writing process never really stopped. What you have written and is yet unfilmed is inevitably affected by what has been filmed. New problems of content or dramatic weight reveal themselves. Rehearsing a scene can also cause script changes. However carefully you think about a scene, and however clearly you believe you have visualized it, it's never the same when you finally see it played. Sometimes a totally new idea comes up out of the blue, during a rehearsal, or even during actual shooting, which is simply too good to ignore. This can necessitate the new scene being worked out with the actors right then and there. As long as the actors know the objectives of the scene, and understand their characters, this is less difficult and much quicker to do than you might imagine.

Roger Ebert; "Technically awesome, emotionally distant, and classically Kubrick" (2009)

Stanley Kubrick's "Barry Lyndon," received indifferently in 1975, has grown in stature in the years since and is now widely regarded as one of the master's best. It is certainly in every frame a Kubrick film: technically awesome, emotionally distant, remorseless in its doubt of human goodness. Based on a novel published in 1844, it takes a form common in the 19th century novel, following the life of the hero from birth to death. The novel by Thackeray, called the first novel without a hero, observes a man without morals, character or judgment, unrepentant, unredeemed. Born in Ireland in modest circumstances, he rises through two armies and the British aristocracy with cold calculation.

"Barry Lyndon" is aggressive in its cool detachment. It defies us to care, it asks us to remain only observers of its stately elegance. Many of its developments take place off-screen, the narrator informing us what's about to happen, and we learn long before the film ends that its hero is doomed. This news doesn't much depress us, because Kubrick has directed Ryan O'Neal in the title role as if he were a still life. It's difficult to imagine such tumultuous events whirling around such a passive character. He loses a fortune, a wife or a leg with as little emotion as he might in losing a dog. Only the death of his son devastates him and that perhaps because he sees himself in the boy.

The casting choice of O'Neal is bold. Not a particularly charismatic actor, he is ideal for the role. Consider Albert Finney in "Tom Jones," for example, bursting with vitality. Finney could not possibly have played Lyndon. O'Neal easily seems self-pitying, narcissistic, on the verge of tears. As one terrible event after another occurs to him, he projects an eerie calm. Nor do his triumphs—in gambling, con games, a fortunate marriage and even acquiring a title—seem to bring him much joy. He is a man to whom things happen.

The other characters seem cast primarily for their faces and their presence, certainly not for their personalities. Look at the curling sneer of the lips of Leonard Rossiter, as Captain Quin, who ends Barry's youthful affair with a cousin by an advantageous offer of marriage. Study the face of Marisa Berenson, as Lady Lyndon. Is there any passion in her marriage? She loves their son as Barry

does, but that seems to be their only feeling in common. When the time comes for her to sign an annuity check for the man who nearly destroyed her family, her pen pauses momentarily, then smoothly advances.

The film has the arrogance of genius. Never mind its budget or the perfectionism in its 300-day shooting schedule. How many directors would have had Kubrick's confidence in taking this ultimately inconsequential story of a man's rise and fall, and realizing it in a style that dictates our attitude toward it? We don't simply see Kubrick's movie, we see it in the frame of mind he insists on -- unless we're so closed to the notion of directorial styles that the whole thing just seems like a beautiful extravagance (which it is). There is no other way to see Barry than the way Kubrick sees him.

Kubrick's work has a sense of detachment and bloodlessness. The most "human" character in "2001: A Space Odyssey" (1968) is the computer, and "A Clockwork Orange" (1971) is disturbing specifically in its objectivity about violence. The title of "Clockwork," from Anthony Burgess' novel, illustrates Kubrick's attitude to his material. He likes to take organic subjects and disassemble them as if they were mechanical. It's not just that he wants to know what makes us tick; he wants to demonstrate that we do all tick. After "Spartacus" (1960), he never again created a major character driven by idealism or emotion.

The events in "Barry Lyndon" could furnish a swashbuckling romance. He falls into a foolish adolescent love, has to leave his home suddenly after a duel, enlists almost accidentally in the British army, fights in Europe, deserts from not one but two armies, falls in with unscrupulous companions, marries a woman of wealth and beauty, and then destroys himself because he lacks the character to survive.

But Kubrick examines Barry's life with microscopic clarity. He has the confidence of the great 19th century novelists, authors who stood above their material and accepted without question their right to manipulate and interpret it with omniscience. Kubrick has appropriated Thackeray's attitude -- or Trollope's or George Eliot's. There isn't Dickens' humor or relish of human character. Barry Lyndon, falling in and out of love and success, may see no pattern in his own affairs, but the artist sees one for him, one of consistent selfish opportunism.

Perhaps Kubrick's buried theme in "Barry Lyndon" is even similar to his outlook in "2001: A Space Odyssey." Both films are about organisms striving to endure and prevail -- and never mind the reason. The earlier film was about the human race itself; this one is about a depraved minor example of it. Barry journeys without plan, sees what he desires, tries to acquire it and perhaps succeeds because he plays roles so well without being remotely dedicated to them. He looks the part of a lover, a soldier, a husband. But there is no there there.

There's a sense in both this film and "2001" that a superior force hovers above these struggles and controls them. In "2001," it was a never-clarified form of higher intelligence. In "Barry Lyndon," it's Kubrick himself, standing aloof from the action by two distancing devices: the narrator (Michael Hordern), who deliberately destroys suspense and tension by informing us of all key developments in advance, and the photography, which is a succession of meticulously, almost coldly, composed set images. It's notable that three of the film's four Oscars were awarded for cinematography (John Alcott), art direction (Ken Adam) and costumes (Ulla-Britt Soderlund and Milena Canonero). The many landscapes are often filmed in long shots; the fields, hills and clouds could be from a landscape by Gainsborough. The interior compositions could be by Joshua Reynolds.

This must be one of the most beautiful films ever made, and yet the beauty isn't in the service of emotion. Against magnificent settings, the characters play at intrigues and scandals. They cheat at cards and marriage, they fight ridiculous duels. This is a film with a backdrop of the Seven Years' War that engulfed Europe, and it hardly seems to think the war

worth noticing, except as a series of challenges posed for Barry Lyndon. By placing such small characters on such a big stage, by forcing our detachment from them, Kubrick supplies a philosophical position just as clearly as if he'd put speeches in his characters' mouths.

The images proceed in elegant stages through the events, often accompanied by the inexorable funereal progression of Handel's "Sarabande." For such an eventful life, there is no attempt to speed the events along. Kubrick told the critic Michel Ciment he used the narrator because the novel had too much incident even for a three-hour film, but there isn't the slightest sense he's condensing.

Some people find "Barry Lyndon" a fascinating, if cold, exercise in masterful filmmaking; others find it a terrific bore. I have little sympathy for the second opinion; how can anyone be bored by such an audacious film? "Barry Lyndon" isn't a great entertainment in the usual way, but it's a great example of directorial vision: Kubrick saying he's going to make this material function as an illustration of the way he sees the world.

COMING UP IN THE FALL 2021 BUFFALO FILM SEMINARS 43:

October 19 Roman Polanski CHINATOWN (1974)
October 26 Roland Joffé THE MISSION (1986))
November 2 Mike Nichols CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR (2007)
November 9 Asghar Farhadi A SEPARATION (2011)
November 16 Hsiao-Hsien Hou THE ASSASSIN (2015)
November 23 Chloé Zhan NOMADLAND (2020)
November 30 Rob Reiner THE PRINCESS BRIDE (1987)

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....for cast and crew info on any film: **http://imdb.com/**

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