



Kubrick's Hope: Discovering Optimism from 2001 to Eyes Wide Shut

Julian Rice

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There have been two common assumptions about Stanley Kubrick: that his films portray human beings who are driven exclusively by aggression and greed, and that he pessimistically rejected meaning in a contingent, postmodern world. However, as Kubrick himself remarked, "A work of art should be always exhilarating and never depressing, whatever its subject matter may be."

In this new interpretation of Kubrick's films, Julian Rice suggests that the director's work had a more positive outlook than most people credit him. And while other studies have recounted Kubrick's life and production histories, few have offered lucid explanations of specific sources and their influence on his films.

In *Kubrick's Hope*, Rice explains how the theories of Freud and Jung took cinematic form, and also considers the significant impression left on the director's last six films by Robert Ardrey, Bruno Bettelheim, and Joseph Campbell. In addition to providing useful contexts, Rice offers close readings of the films, inviting readers to note details they may have missed and to interpret them in their own way. By refreshing their experience of the films and discarding postmodern clichés, viewers may discover more optimistic themes in the director's works.

Beginning with *2001: A Space Odyssey* and continuing through *A Clockwork Orange*, *Barry Lyndon*, *The Shining*, *Full Metal Jacket*, and *Eyes Wide Shut*, Rice illuminates Kubrick's thinking at the time he made each film. Throughout, Rice examines the compelling political, psychological, and spiritual issues the director raises. As this book contends, if these works are considered together and repeatedly re-viewed, Kubrick's films may help viewers to personally grow and collectively endure.

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