

2001: A Space Odyssey

Politics & Times of the Late 60's When 2001 Was Released

This movie debuted in 1968 about the same time as the first lunar landing by American astronauts _____ and _____ on July 20, _____. This movie is based on the novel by the same name authored by _____. Although the movie was popular and won an academy award for special effects, it was not widely understood and to some extent under-appreciated at the time. The _____ war was raging in Southeast Asia and there were civil rights protests in the streets. President _____, who kicked-off our space program in 1960 was assassinated in 1963 as was his brother, _____, in June, 1968—the night he won the California Primary Election for President. _____, a lifelong, successful, and powerful politician took over as president in November, 1963. Likewise, civil-rights leader _____ was assassinated April, 1968. Indeed these were tumultuous, difficult and troubling times.

The movie opens up with a scene with some apes around a water hole. Why do the apes make all the loud yelling sounds as the other pack of apes approach?

How does the scene by the water hole that depict the ape(s) exerting dominance by jumping up and down and making loud noises relate to present-day mankind?

List three things that differentiate man from other primates?

- a)
- b)
- c)

What is the only species to wage organized war on itself besides Homo Sapiens?

What is the significance of the ape pounding the skeleton with the bone? What does the bone represent? Hint: The answer is *not* weapons.

What present-day space vehicle does the docking rocket from earth going to the space station in the movie look remarkably similar to?

Why did the space ship (shuttle) from earth dock in the center of the space station?

Why was the space station round and *rotating*? What purpose does the rotation of the space station serve?

The space station currently being built by the US and other countries in space is *not* round and *not* rotating. Why?

As the spaceship approaches the space station for landing, what is the relative (rotational) velocity?

Why did Kubrick use the Blue Danube Waltz by Richard Strauss for this scene?

Who was the first to advocate broadcasting TV from satellites in geosynchronous orbits in space in 1945?

What famous computer firm do the letters HAL in HAL-9000 suggest?

Interestingly, Kubrick was criticized for making the spaceship *Discovery* on its voyage to Jupiter un-streamlined and not aerodynamic. Was criticism valid? Why or why not?

Why did HAL pick the antenna part to fail?

Putting astronauts in a state of “suspended animation” (in the deep freeze) makes sense because of conservation of resources. However, why were the astronauts put into this state several months *before* the launch?

How are the hallways of the space station depicted in the movie different than those here on earth?

On the way to the moon, the space (flight) attendant appears to walk in a circle upside down. How do you suppose the director, Kubrick, achieved this special effect?

Why was the discovery of the obelisk on the moon was kept top-secret?

The movie depicts space ships moving at slow speeds not far above the moon's surface compared to earth. Is this realistic? Cite two reasons why this is so.

a)

b)

While the astronauts are working outside the spaceship *Discovery* to retrieve the antenna part, why does the movie make the astronauts breathing so loud? Is this realistic? Why?

What happens to the astronaut Frank as he attempts to replace the antenna unit?

In his haste to retrieve his fellow astronaut, Dave makes a big mistake using the pod. What did Dave forget to do?

After retrieving Frank, Dave has a confrontation with HAL who won't let him back into the spaceship. This is one of the most famous scenes in all of cinema—particularly science fiction genre. What does HAL do?

What is Dave's solution? Is this scene realistic?

Name two themes of the movie.

a)

b)

Free Response. Would the discovery of intelligent life forms (i.e., more intelligent than man) elsewhere in the universe alter or change you belief systems (religion)? Why or why not?