



SILVERSCREEN
PRIMARY
EDUCATION

1980s Cinema: Mullets, Ray-Bans & Teenage Angst

By Adam Pepper

Session 6



Welcome to Session 6 of this '1980s Cinema: 'Mullets, Ray-Bans & Teenage Angst' course!

Over these ten weeks, we will journey through over 20 years of cinema to find the secrets behind some of the most iconic, ground-breaking, popular and culture-changing stories and movies from this, the cheesiest and most action-packed of all decades!

We will study the directors, writers, actors, stories and history of the time to uncover how the 1980s created such a shift in film and storytelling, and gave us some of our most iconic film stars and characters.

We will look at their beginnings, their inspirations and the news they lived through to chart a path to some of the greatest and most rewatched films ever made.

Session 6:

After last week's totally joyous dive into the kind and angst-filled world of teenage life through the movies of John Hughes, and our earlier week's look at the emergence of a new breed of action hero, this week sees us reach the zenith...

Everything has been leading to this...

The greatest year in cinema. 1984.

This year seems to sum up everything we have been following so far; we have the return of Dr. Jones, a plethora of huge hits starring Saturday Night Live alumni (one of them even becoming a bona fide action star), teen movies (with dancing!!), and the emergence of the movie based around the greatest music of the year!

It's as if we did the first half of the 1980s, saw what was selling at the box office and said, 'More please, with a side of Bacon!'

From this point on, the 80s movies go 'full-80s', and we are so going to be here for it!

More hits, more muscles, more Vietnam vets, more Spielberg behind the scenes, more laughs, more ghosts, more one-liners and plenty more opportunities to see just how strong and sunny Reagan's America can be!

Useful information for Session 6:

Harold Ramis

Harold Allen Ramis (November 21, 1944 – February 24, 2014) was an American actor, comedian, and filmmaker. His film acting roles include Egon Spengler in *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *Ghostbusters II* (1989), and as Russell Ziskey in *Stripes* (1981); he also co-wrote those films. As a director, his films include the comedies *Caddyshack* (1980), *National Lampoon's Vacation* (1983), *Groundhog Day* (1993), *Analyze This* (1999) and *Analyze That* (2002). Ramis was the original head writer of the television series *SCTV*, on which he also performed, as well as a co-writer of *Groundhog Day* and *National Lampoon's Animal House* (1978). The final film that he wrote, produced, directed, and acted in was *Year One* (2009).

Ramis' films influenced subsequent generations of comedians, comedy writers and actors. Filmmakers and actors including Jay Roach, Jake Kasdan, Adam Sandler, Judd Apatow, and Peter and Bobby Farrelly have listed his films among their favorites. Along with Danny Rubin, he won the BAFTA Award for Best Original Screenplay for *Groundhog Day*.

Ramis was born on November 21, 1944, in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Ruth (née Cokee) (1919–2001) and Nathan Ramis (1915–2009), who owned the Ace Food & Liquor Mart on the city's West Side. Ramis had a Jewish upbringing. In his adult life, he did not practice any religion. He graduated from Stephen K. Hayt Elementary School in June 1958 and Nicholas Senn High School in 1962, both Chicago public schools, and in 1966 from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, where he was a member of the Alpha Xi chapter of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity.

Afterward, Ramis worked in a mental institution in St. Louis for seven months. He later said of his time working there that it:

...prepared me well for when I went out to Hollywood to work with actors. People laugh when I say that, but it was actually very good training. And not just with actors; it was good training for just living in the world. It's knowing how to deal with people who might be reacting in a way that's connected to anxiety or grief or fear or rage. As a director, you're dealing with that constantly with actors. But if I were a businessman, I'd probably be applying those same principles to that line of work.

Eddie Murphy

Edward Regan Murphy (born April 3, 1961) is an American actor, comedian, and singer. He had his breakthrough as a standup comic before gaining stardom for his film roles; he is widely recognized as one of the greatest comedians of all time. He has received several accolades including a Golden Globe Award, a Grammy Award, and an Emmy Award as well as nominations for an Academy Award and a BAFTA Award. He was honored with the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor in 2015 and the Cecil B. DeMille Award in 2023.

Murphy shot to fame on the sketch comedy show *Saturday Night Live*, for which he was a regular cast member from 1980 to 1984 and broke out as a movie star in the 1980s films *48 Hrs.*, *Trading Places*, and *Beverly Hills Cop*. He then established himself as a leading man with starring roles in: *The Golden Child* (1986), *Coming to America* (1988), *Harlem Nights* (which he also directed) (1989), *Boomerang* (1992), *The Nutty Professor* (1996), *Dr. Dolittle* (1997), *Bowfinger* (1999), *Daddy Day Care* (2003), and *Norbit* (2007). Murphy both won the Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actor and received a nomination for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in *Dreamgirls* (2006).

Murphy has worked as a voice actor, including Mushu in Disney's *Mulan* (1998), Thurgood Stubbs in the sitcom *The PJs* (1999–2001), and Donkey in the *Shrek* franchise (2001–present), the latter of which earned him a BAFTA Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role nomination. Murphy often takes on multiple roles in a single film, such as in *Coming to America*, the *Nutty Professor* films, *Bowfinger* and *Norbit*. This is intended as Murphy's tribute to one of his idols, Peter Sellers. Following a string of poorly received films, he had a career resurgence with leading roles in films such as *Dolemite Is My Name* (2019), *Coming 2 America* (2021), *You People*, *Candy Cane Lane* (both 2023) and *Beverly Hills Cop: Axel F* (2024).

Films to look out for:

Flashdance (1983)

Gremlins (1984)

Indiana Jones & The Temple of Doom (1984)

A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984)

Romancing The Stone (1984)

This Is Spinal Tap (1984)

Footloose (1984)

Ghostbusters (1984)

Police Academy (1984)

Beverly Hills Cop (1984)

Karate Kid (1984)

Purple Rain (1984)

