

Faculti Summary

<https://staging.faculti.net/revisiting-apocalypse-now/>

The speaker reflects on their academic journey related to the film "Apocalypse Now" and its production context, particularly through a course taken at NYU and the documentary "Hearts of Darkness." Revisiting the film in relation to Asian American critiques, the speaker became interested in "Apocalypse Child," a film that explores the impacts of "Apocalypse Now." This video led to visits to the production sites in the Philippines, particularly Bel Air, raising questions about the historical and cultural implications of such film productions vis-à-vis the local Filipino experience.

The discussion reveals the challenges faced during the production of "Apocalypse Now," including casting difficulties and environmental obstacles like monsoon seasons that delayed filming. The speaker emphasizes the contradictions and myth-making surrounding Hollywood's portrayal of the Philippines and its people. They mention how the film's production accumulated financial and cultural capital largely at the expense of local Filipino labor and resources, further complicating the narrative of US military and colonial activities within the region.

In examining their own biases while acknowledging the broader Philippine context, the speaker critiques a limited focus on screen representations, advocating for a deeper exploration of the historical and socio-political framework surrounding film production. They express a desire to pursue future research using an archeological approach, focusing on the nuances of each location used in filming and the lived experiences of those involved, especially against the backdrop of Philippine martial law.

Overall, the text serves as a critical reflection on the intersections of film history, imperialism, and the ongoing narratives around identity and representation, emphasizing the need for a more nuanced understanding of these relationships beyond Hollywood myths.