The New Cinema
And Mike Nichols’ *The Graduate*
Reasons to Develop a New American Cinema

- Loss of traditional audiences to television and need to cultivate new customers
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- Success of new Europeans: Truffaut, Godard, Antonioni
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- Success of underground filmmakers: Robert Downey, Andy Warhol, Brian De Palma
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- Realization that films could make money by appealing to specialized audiences
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- Changing values of American society in the second half of 1960s
Characteristics of New American Cinema

- Protagonists are anti-heroes: offbeat, deviant, lawless misfits
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- Antagonists tend to be respectable, legal authorities
Characteristics of New American Cinema

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- Protagonists experience exhilarating freedom, but come to unhappy or tragic ends
Characteristics of New American Cinema

- Self conscious and unrealistic use of cinematic effects
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- Explicit treatment of violence, sexual conflicts, and psychological problems
Characteristics of New American Cinema

- Deliberately artificial sound tracks called attention to themselves rather than subtly creating a mood
The Graduate (1967)

Directed by Mike Nichols

Screen adaptation by Calder Willingham and Buck Henry

Based on the novel The Graduate by Charles Webb
And in the naked light I saw
Ten thousand people maybe more
People talking without speaking
People hearing without listening
People writing songs
That voices never share
No one dare
Disturb the sounds of silence

from “The Sounds of Silence”
Paul Simon
Glass and water as barriers and reflective surfaces
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Jump cuts
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