

<b>Title</b>	The Seventh Seal
<b>Director</b>	Ingmar Bergman
<b>Date</b>	1957
<b>Area</b>	Moral philosophy
<b>Theme</b>	Meaning of life
<b>Plot Summary</b>	In fourteenth century Sweden, the knight Antonius Block (Max von Sydow) and his squire return from the Crusades to find the Black Death rife in the land. Faced with the threat of mass death, people are questioning all moral and religious values. God himself seems to have abandoned humanity, and the dominant question raised by the film's characters is whether life has any meaning at all. The knight still looks to a god to give some meaning or justification to suffering, to the plague-ridden world.
<b>Key Scenes</b>	In the confessional, Block tells a priest (in fact Death disguised) that if God isn't there, "then life is a senseless terror. No man can live with Death and know that everything is nothing." It would mean that people are dying of the plague for no reason. He confesses: 'I want God to put out his hand, show his face, speak to me. I cry out to him in the dark but there is no one there.' He is anguished about whether God exists. But at the same time he also refuses to surrender his critical faculties, to commit 'philosophical suicide' (Camus), to blindly believe in God. He has to have proof.
<b>Relevant Text</b>	Peter Cowie, Ingmar Bergman: A Critical Biography. At the time the film was being made, Bergman indicated that for him the atom bomb corresponded to a modern plague (see Cowie 1982, 141).