Kurosawa's Seven Samurai

By Mike Kurilla

This week, Cinematech is offering Akira Kurosawa's massive epic Seven Samurai. To fully appreciate this film, some background into Japanese cinema is required, as the basic attitudes and themes going into these films is many times foreign to the Westerner. Japan has a set of native aesthetics that are firmly built on tradition. This coupled with foreign film styles and techniques gives a texture to Japanese films that is not found in too many other countries. One obvious example is the continued use of black and white long after color had come into vogue. Its use goes back to early art forms that maintained that illusion was more effective than explicitness.

Japanese art is influenced by a sense of anti-reality, reality being reserved for the imitation of appearances. The purpose of the art form is to "create a special order of heightened experience." Film as an art form is well suited for this purpose. The camera's eye is very literal, while the use of editing and special effects can break that unity and order, to be put back together in another order, more effective than reality. It is interesting to note that most Western directors began in the theater, many of the Japanese directors had their beginnings as painters. This has a direct influence on their films in that they begin with expressive images and their frames tend to be highly involved combinations of placement and movement.

One rather confusing aspect of the Japanese cinema is that it calls heavily on history to provide a background for much of the settings and themes of the films. To most Western observers, Japanese history may seem very bland as to definite periods; however, the history can be segmented into definite eras that are easy to grasp. The setting on Seven Samurai is at the end of the 16th century, near the end of the "age of the country at war." This was a bloody time for Japan, an era that saw only 16 years of peace in three centuries. The land was overrun with feudal lords whose lifetime goals were to rule all of Japan. This left the country in a type of free-for-all civil war. It was also during this

Continued on Two
Commentary

Bakke Is Wrong

By Kent Daniel

The Supreme Court of the United States has now heard the arguments for the case of Bakke vs. University of California. The minority admissions programs that have become so much a part of every college admissions program are now being tested in one of the most controversial cases of the decade.

Bakke claimed that he was discriminated against in his attempt to matriculate at the University of California at Davis Medical School. He feels that without the admissions quotas for minorities, he would now be enrolled in the medical school. He seems not to realize that those with high scores and high GPAs do not necessarily make the best students. The admissions committee at Davis realizes this, but Bakke does not. Nine medical schools other than Davis also rejected Bakke, but he does not question his belief that he would have been accepted but for the sixteen places reserved for minorities. He fails to see that there are considerations other than academic taken into consideration when selecting students. He may very well have been lacking in these other areas.

Despite the fact that Bakke's case is fallacious, there still remain the questions about minority quotas on a more general level. Are these special programs discriminatory against whites? Do they violate the fourteenth amendment?

Some argue that minority members with virtually no qualifications are allowed to enter medical school while non-minority members with impeccable credentials are turned down. This is the basis for minorities acceptance letter from a medical school is a rare thing. Only 25% of the minority students applying to the UCD medical school are accepted. Although this is somewhat better than for non-minority students, it is not as though they are accepting everyone. Even minority-trained applicants. Rather, only those who are extremely well-qualified are accepted. Although the minority GPA and test score averages are somewhat lower, these people are by no means unqualified.

Despite all of this, some claim that the fourteenth amendment is being violated. It is easier for minority members to get into medical school, therefore the special programs are discriminatory as they give minorities an advantage.

These people are forgetting the short amount of time that has passed since Brown vs. The Board was decided by the Supreme Court. It has been less than 25 years since the Supreme Court ruled segregation illegal.

Many people currently applying to medical school once attended a segregated school, one that the Supreme Court decreed was not on the same educational plane as white schools. The people who once attended these schools have obviously minority members who have passed on the same educational advantages because of their color.

At sometime in the future, special admissions programs will have to be taken out of service. But that time is not here yet. Only when all have had equal chance up to the point of applying to these schools can these programs be rescinded.

At this time, Johnson's allegory that you can not release a man who has been chained for hundreds of years, put in a foot race and expect him to be anywhere near the finish still holds true. This man still needs a head start. This is what the special programs give to the best students. The admissions programs discriminatory against minorities in the medical school.

Kurosawa

Continued from One

time that the ideals of killing and dying for glory emerged. In Japan and throughout the film, the fear and anxiety of the people involved is evident.

The director, Akira Kurosawa, is sometimes described as the most Western of the Japanese directors. However, both his values and techniques are definitely Japanese. His Westernness is due to his choice of themes which are understood all over the world. The success of his films were later remade by Hollywood into popular Westerns.

The American version of Seven Samurai was called The Magnificent Seven, with gunfighters taking the place of samurals and pistols being used instead of the sword. The story is unchanged. Besides historical dramas with lots of action, he has made many medical stories and crime thrillers.

Kurosawa's interests lie in examining people on the verge of a decision between painful growth or passive retreat. His use of imagery and excitement to set the pace, and his dedication to getting abilities all blend to create very powerful films.

Seven Samurai is concerned with a small village that is being attacked by bandits. The peasants hire a group of samurals to protect them. There is a natural division between the peasants and the samurals that must be overcome. During the film, Kurosawa area in on which of the samurals, until the audience begins to personally feel each death as the loss of a friend. The story is told from various viewpoints and is heightened with excitement to set the pace, and his dedication to getting abilities all blend to create very powerful films.

Shichinin no samurals are faced with a small village that is being attacked by bandits. The peasants hire a group of samurals to protect them. There is a natural division between the peasants and the samurals that must be overcome. During the film, Kurosawa area in on each of the samurals, until the audience begins to personally feel each death as the loss of a friend. The story is told from various viewpoints and is heightened with excitement to set the pace, and his dedication to getting abilities all blend to create very powerful films.

Despite all of this, some claim that the fourteenth amendment is being violated. It is easier for minority members to get into medical school, therefore the special programs are discriminatory as they give minorities an advantage.

The California Tech publications offices are located in Winnett Center (107-51), California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA 91125. Tel: (818) 576-5021. Printed by News-Type Service, 1606 Gardenia Avenue, Glendale, CA. Second-Class postage paid at Pasadena, CA.

By-Line: Ernie Pyle, Royce Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles (625-2955)
William Windom brings back to life Ernie Pyle, depression-era and wartime journalist famous for some of his "just plain folks" human interest stories about young servicemen. Tuesday, October 18 at 8:30 pm.

California Chamber Symphony, Royce Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles (625-2955) Rachmaninoff will conduct the world premiere of a violin concerto by Eugene Ysaye in his first appearance with Henri Temianka and the California Chamber Symphony on Sunday evening, October 16. Rachmaninoff will perform a concerto by Fritz Kreisler and Paganini's Moto Perpetuo. The Symphony will be featured in a Vivaldi Concerto for Strings, the Pachelbel Canon in D, and Mozart's Symphony in A.

Chapter Two, Ahmanson Theatre, 135 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles (577-2721). A romantic comedy that portrays the life of a widower and a divorce Opens today and will continue through November 26.


Purse Strings, La Mama Theatre, 275 North Van Ness Avenue in Hollywood (995-0248). Presented by the Pablo Works Pro­ vidi­ tional Theatre Company. A comedy dealing with the confusion of today's society in dealing with money, power, self-esteem and love. Sunday and Monday evenings at 8:30.

Half a Deck, Coronet Studio Three, 368 North La Cienega Boulevard (273-7275). Runs indefinitely Friday and Saturday Evenings at 8:30.

This semester is the right time to get a TI calculator tailored to the work you're doing.

**SR-51-II**
Professional decision making system.
Loaded with statistics functions.

**The MBA**
Business calculator
A business major's dream machine.

* $5995

* $7995

Accounting. Marketing. Education.
Statistics plays a major role in dozens of career fields. Here's a calculator with the advanced capability you need to handle your projects. Comes with **Calculating Better Decisions**, a $4.95 book value. Helps you get the most out of the SR-51-II. Step-by-step illustrations show how to use its powerful preprogrammed functions. Learn how to gather data. Weigh alternatives. Arrive at rapid, accurate decisions.

If you're building a career in business, the MBA can be ideal. It provides instant answers to complex business problems at the touch of a key. It is preprogrammed for a wide variety of functions and formulas business professionals face every day. Take internal rate of return, for example, a valuable calculation for accurate capital budgeting. It's complicated, often difficult, and takes time. The MBA handles it in seconds, for 12 different cash flows! It also offers programmability—up to 32 keystrokes for solving repetitive problems easily.

*Suggested retail price.
Veal Scaloppini
Beef Enchiladas
Fruit Cocktail

Do you really want to eat tonight?

We don't blame you. Get out of the food service rut and come over to Burger Continental for some real food.

Caltech's Burger Continental