

## **History 132:01: History and Film**

Spring 2005

Monday and Wednesday 11:00am to 12:15.

Instructor: John Lund, Ph.D.

Office Hours: 1pm to 3pm Crestview 300, phone #1015 or lundj@fpc.edu

### **Course Overview:**

This course explores the impact that film has had both on the study of history and on actual historical developments in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The course will include analyses of a number of films in terms of how they effect the popular understanding of history. Topics include cinematic representations of race, class, gender, and sexuality. A special emphasis is placed on cinematic representations of World War II and the threat of terrorism.

### **Objectives:**

After completing this course, you should possess the following:

- i. the necessary skills for visual literacy.
- ii. the ability to assess the historical accuracy of Hollywood film.
- iii. a firm grasp of the relationship between film and American national culture.
- iv. knowledge of how film has shaped and continues to shape notions of race, class, gender, and sexuality.
- v. well developed analytical and critical thinking skills, as well as proficiency in written and oral communication.

### **Required Readings:**

There are three books assigned for this course. All are available at the campus bookstore.

Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin, America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies (2004).

Studs Terkel, "The Good War:" An Oral History of World War II (1984)

Fredrik Logevall, Terrorism and 9/11: A Reader (2002).

### **Requirements:**

**Quizzes.** Five short quizzes on the assigned readings and the in-class films. The quizzes will also prepare you for the exams.

**Exams.** A midterm and final exam will test your knowledge of the assigned course material. In cases of medical and other emergencies, arrangements for makeup exams, in so far as they are possible, must be made prior to the examination by contacting me personally. All students must take the final exam at the scheduled time and should plan travel arrangements accordingly.

**Essays.** Two short essays, between three and four pages, AND a five to seven page essay will allow you to develop your ability to formulate a clear and plausible thesis supported by the evidence. All essays must be word processed (hand-written papers will not be accepted.) Content, grammar, style, and sentence structure will all factor into the paper grade. In fairness to students who turn in their papers on time, late papers will penalized one half grade for each day late. The topics will be announced in class. FOOTNOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL ESSAY PROJECTS.

**Attendance:** Two classroom absences are the maximum permitted without a grade penalty. The fourth and each additional absence will reduce your final course grade by half (i.e. from A- to B+).

**Format:**

During the semester we will discuss the assigned readings and screen a variety of films in class. While I will provide essential background information, this is primarily a discussion course. That means we will devote a considerable amount of time to the discussion of both the assigned readings and the films. It is imperative that you bring the books to class on the day that they are in use and that you are in class to contribute to the discussion. **ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN CLASS ACTIVITIES IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THIS COURSE.**

From late January to late March, we will explore the connections between films by and American national culture largely through readings in America on Film and in-class screenings. In April and the first week of May we will apply the knowledge gained in the first three quarters of the class to specific topics: representations of World War II in film and the threat of terrorism as presented in film.

**Plagiarism:** Identifiable instances of plagiarism can result in a failing grade for the course and a report to the Dean. Plagiarism includes submission of unacknowledged work and all instances mandated in the College Catalogue. You are responsible for making yourself aware of all of these instances. If you are unsure of exactly what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

**Withdrawals:** Students may withdraw on their own initiative during the first four weeks, with a grade of W recorded. After this period, withdrawals may only be initiated by the instructor in cases of emergency, with a grade of WP (Withdrawn Passing) or WF (Withdrawn Failing) being reported.

**Grading:**

Quizzes (5% each)	25%
Short Essays (10% each)	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Final Essay	<u>15%</u>
Total	100%

### **Cinematic Representations of Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality**

**Course Schedule:**

Week 1: Introduction

Jan 24: Introduction to the course.

Jan 26: Film and American Culture

Read: America on Film Chapter 1.

Week 2: Hollywood Filmmaking

Jan 31: Classic Hollywood Narrative Form

Read: America on Film Chapter 2.

Feb 2: In-class screening. TBA **QUIZ #1**

Week 3: Race and Film

Feb 7: Concepts of Whiteness

Read: America on Film Chapter 3.

Feb 9: In-class screening. TBA

Week 4: Race and Film

Feb 14: The Case of African Americans and Native Americans

Read: America on Film Chapter 4 and 5. **QUIZ #2**

Feb 16: In-class screening. TBA

Week 5: Race and Film

Feb 21: Presidents' Day

Feb 23: The Case of Asian Americans and Latinos

Read: America on Film Chapter 6 and 7.

Week 6: Class and Film

Feb 28: Class-consciousness?

Read: America on Film Chapter 8 and 9.

**FIRST SHORT ESSAY ON RACE AND FILM DUE**

March 2: In-class screening. TBA

Week 7: Gender and Film

March 7: Notions of Femininity.

Read: America on Film Chapter 10 and 11.

March 9: In-class screening. TBA **QUIZ #3**

Week 8: Gender and Film

March 14: Notions of Masculinity

Read: America on Film Chapter 12 and 13.

March 16: **MIDTERM.**

Week 9: Spring Break. No Classes, March 21 and 23.

Week 10: Sexuality and American Film

March 28: Heterosexuality/Homosexuality

Read: America on Film Chapter 14 and 15.

March 30: In-class screening. TBA

### **Case Study I: Cinematic Representations of World War II**

Week 11: The Good War

April 4: American Recall World War II

Read: The Good War 1-16, 108-134, 301-342.

**SECOND SHORT ESSAY ON GENDER/SEXUALITY AND FILM DUE**

April 6: In Class Screening TBA.

Week 12: War Stories

April 11: On the Home Front and Front Lines

Read: The Good War 19-97, 135-165, 254-297.

April 13: In Class Screening TBA.

Week 13: Chilly Winds

April 18: Remembrance of Things Past **QUIZ #4**

Read: The Good War 444 - 573.

April 20: In Class Screening TBA.

**Case Study II: Cinematic Representations of Terrorists  
and the Threat of Terrorism**

Week 14: Terrorism in Film

April 25: Terrorism 1-84.

April 27: In Class Screening TBA.

Week 15: Terrorism in Film

May 2: Read: Terrorism 85- 143 **QUIZ #5**

May 4: In Class Screening TBA.

**FINAL EXAM AND FINAL PAPER AS PER SCHEDULE**