

Hist 387–Ints 375: History at the Movies

Alison Landsberg and Matt Karush, Professors

Hist 387-003/INTS 375-004

Fall 2022

Class: TR 4:30 pm - 7:10 pm, Innovation Hall 136

Office Hours: Karush, T 1:30-2:30, and by appointment, Horizon Hall

Landsberg, R 1:30-2:30, and by appointment, Horizon Hall 3157

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Course Description:

Many of our ideas about the past, and our images of what it looked like, come from the movies. This course explores how film might represent a serious and complex engagement with the past. We will watch movies from the US, Europe and Latin America – about the Holocaust, slavery, and dictatorship – to uncover the historical arguments they make and the way they contribute to the interpretive debates of historians. We will explore not only what these films tell us about the past but also what they reveal about the political and historical moments in which they were produced. Why do certain historical episodes become “popular” at certain moments, and why do those representations change over time? What work do historical films do in the present?

[Policies and Requirements](#)

[Syllabus and Readings](#)

[Weekly Writing Instructions](#)

[On Reading Critically](#)

[Analyzing a Film](#)

Paper Assignments

Policies and Requirements

Texts:

Eds. [Mark M. Smith](#) and [Robert L. Paquette](#), eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas* available as e-book through Mason Library:

https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_863898083

Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship* (Bloomsbury) ISBN: 978-1-4742-4095-6

Jerry Davila, *Dictatorship in South America* | Edition: 1 (Wiley) ISBN: 9781405190558

Robert A. Rosenstone, *History on Film/Film on History* | Edition: 3 (Taylor & Francis) ISBN: 978-1138653337

Virtually all of the films as well as the books listed above are on reserve in Fenwick. Here's a link to access them:

https://wrlc-gm.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/01WRLC_GML/lists/18847526120004105?auth=CAS

*Other required readings (articles and book chapters) will be available on the class wiki or distributed as pdfs.

*You might occasionally be required to view some films on your own outside of class.

Course Goals:

1. To enable students to come to an understanding of the complexity of filmic representations of the past: to understand the way in which all history is, in fact, an argument about, rather than a reflection of, the past.
2. To help students gain an understanding of what, precisely, film offers historians and viewers, that history monographs do not.
3. To sharpen students' critical reading skills, to enhance students' ability to write a paper with a clear argument, and to foster engaged classroom participation.

Course Requirements:

Participation, In-class writing, discussion questions, and quizzes: 15%

Weekly writing exercises (10 required): 20%

Paper #1: 20%

Paper #2: 20%

Final take-home exam: 25%

Additional Requirements, Explanations and Class Policies:

1. As key ideas will be discussed in class, you MUST ATTEND CLASS regularly to do well; attendance will be crucial to your understanding of the material. Active class participation means contributing to class discussion. Please arrive promptly because screenings will begin at the start of class.

2. You may also be required to view films on your own outside of class.

3. You must join the class wiki. You will receive an email invitation from us. On the wiki, you will find the syllabus, requirements, required readings, and paper assignments.

4. You must complete the assigned readings *before* class, bring the readings with you, and to be prepared to discuss them in class. For each discussion session, bring at least one substantive question based on the reading. We will select a handful of students at random to share your questions with the class.

5. Absolutely no unexcused late papers; extensions must be requested one week in advance of the due date.

6. Technology:

E-Mail: Everyone must have an activated masonlive.gmu.edu e-mail account. We will only use these addresses, so if you want to use another email provider, activate your GMU account and have mail forwarded.

Cell Phones: No cell phones out (or ringing) during class. Absolutely no texting during class.

Laptops: No laptops allowed. If you have a specific reason for needing a laptop, please contact us to discuss an accommodation.

7. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see one of us and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

8. You are all bound by the GMU Honor code. For a statement of the Honor Code, see <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>. Plagiarism or cheating in any form will not be tolerated.

Plagiarism: Make sure to read the George Mason Plagiarism Statement, excerpted here: "Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful, to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism. (statement of English Department at George Mason University)

Plagiarism and copyright: Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page. Shareware graphics are not free. Freeware clipart is available for you to freely use. If the material does not say "free," assume it is not. Putting someone else's Internet material on your web page is stealing intellectual property. Making links to a site is, at this time, okay, but getting permission is strongly advised, since many Web sites have their own requirements for linking to their material."

Important Dates: ([Academic Calendar, Fall 2022](#))

September 6: Last day to drop with no tuition penalty

September 13: Last day to drop with a 50% tuition penalty

September 28-October 24: Selective withdrawal period for undergraduates

GMU Campus Resources:

Academic Advising for CHSS students: <https://academicaffairs.chss.gmu.edu/undergraduate-students>

Advising for History majors & minors. <https://historyarthistory.gmu.edu/undergraduate/welcome>

Career Services: For networking, mentors, and assistance applying for jobs. SUB 1 Room 3400, 703-993-2370, careers@gmu.edu, <https://careers.gmu.edu/>

Chosen Name & Pronoun Policy: For information on how to update your chosen name and pronouns. <https://registrar.gmu.edu/updating-chosen-name-pronouns/>

Counseling and Psychological Services: For free counseling. SUB I Room 3129, 703-993-2380, <http://caps.gmu.edu>

COVID-19 Safe Return to Campus: <https://www2.gmu.edu/coronavirus>

Disability Services: <http://ods.gmu.edu>

Financial Well-Being: Assistance understanding your finances and financial aid. <https://ssac.gmu.edu/fwb/>

Free speech information: <https://campusclimate.gmu.edu/1415-2/> and <https://www.gmu.edu/about-mason/university-policy/free-speech-mason>

Learning Services: Free coaching & academic skills workshops. <https://learningservices.gmu.edu/>

LGBTQ Resources: <http://lgbtq.gmu.edu>

Library Info Guides: <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/>

Mason Alerts: Sign up at <https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/> for alerts related to emergencies and closings.

Office of Academic Integrity: <https://oai.gmu.edu/>

Patriot Pantry: For free food assistance or to make donations. <https://ssac.gmu.edu/patriot-pantry/> or email pantry@gmu.edu to make a private appointment to use the pantry.

Patriot Web: For registration, transcripts, and degree evaluations. <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/>

Stay Mason Emergency Assistance Fund: For degree-seeking students in acute financial distress who are at risk of dropping out. NOTE: The application process takes a while, and funds are limited. But, it's worth a try! <https://ulife.gmu.edu/forms/stay-mason-student-support-fund-application/>






































Student Support & Advocacy Center: For health, well-being, and support. SUB I Suite 3200, 703-993-3686, <https://ssac.gmu.edu/>

University Policies: All members of the Mason community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

- The Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>
- University Policies <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>
- CHSS Policies <https://academicaffairs.chss.gmu.edu/ugradpolicies>

Writing Center: Multiple locations, 703-993-1200, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

Syllabus and Readings

Date	Topic	Readings due/Screenings/Assignments	PDFs
8/23	Reading a Film		
8/25	History as Narrative	Robert Rosenstone, <i>History on Film/Film on History</i> , Intro and Chapters 1-4, 7 and 9 Hayden White, "Historiography and Historiophoty," <i>American Historical Review</i> 93:5 (1988), 1193-99 (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 Historiography and Historiophoty.pdf
The Holocaust: Representing Atrocity			
8/30	Film Screening	<i>The Pianist</i> (Roman Polanski, 2002)	
9/1	Discussion	Kershaw, <i>The Nazi Dictatorship</i> , Chapter 1 and 2 (pp. 1-54) Tom Lawson, <i>Debates on the Holocaust</i> , Chapter 7 Michael Rothberg, "Introduction" to <i>Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation</i> (Madison: University of Minnesota Press, 2000) pp.1-15. (pdf) (see the image "Saying Goodbye to Maus"--it is described in the Rothberg reading) Weekly Writing due	 Rothberg-Traumatic Realism.pdf  Saying Goodbye to Maus.pdf  Lawson Ch7.pdf
9/6	Film Screening	<i>Schindler's List</i> (Steven Spielberg, 1993)	
9/8	Discussion	Kershaw, Chaps 4 and 5 (pp. 81-155) Chap 7 (pp.187-211) Zygmunt Bauman, "The Uniqueness and Normality of the Holocaust," in Neil Levi and Michael Rothberg, eds., <i>The Holocaust: Theoretical Readings</i> (Rutgers, 2003). (pdf) Joan Miriam Ringelheim, "The Unethical and the Unspeakable: Women and the Holocaust" in Levi and Rothberg (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 Bauman.pdf  Ringelheim.pdf
9/13	Film Screening	<i>Shoah</i> (Claude Lanzmann, 1985) clips in class	
9/15	Discussion	Lawson, Chap. 8 Rosenstone, Chap. 5 Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, "Representing Auschwitz" (pdf) Lawrence L. Langer, "Deep Memory: The Buried Self" (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 ezrahi.pdf  langer.pdf  Lawson Ch8.pdf
9/20	Film Screening	<i>Europa, Europa</i> (Agnieszka Holland, 1990) Paper Writing session	 Paper Writing-History at the Moveis.pptx
9/22	Discussion	Kershaw, Chapter 8-10 (pp. 213-313) Christopher Browning, "Ordinary Men" in Levi and Rothberg (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 Browning.pdf
9/27	Film Screening	<i>Son of Saul</i> (László Nemes, 2015)	
9/29	Discussion	Giorgio Agamben, "What is a Camp" in Levi and Rothberg (pdf) Jean-Francois Lyotard, "The Differend" in Levi and Rothberg (pdf) Primo Levi, "The Gray Zone" in <i>The Drowned and The Saved</i> (Vintage, 1989) (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 Agamben.pdf  Lyotard.pdf  levi_gray_zone.pdf
Slavery in the Americas: Race and a Usable Past			
10/4	Film Screening	Watch <i>Roots</i> (1977) in class Episodes 2 and 3 (on HBO) Paper #1 due (via email)	
10/6	Discussion	Robert L. Paquette and Mark M. Smith, "Slavery in the Americas," <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) Jeff Forret, "Early Republic and Antebellum United States," <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) Kevin Dawson, "Slave Culture," <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) Orlando Patterson, "Introduction: The Constituent Elements of Slavery," from <i>Slavery and Social Death</i> (pdf) Sidney Mintz and Richard Price, "The Birth of African American Culture" (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 SlaveryIntro.pdf  Forret chapter.pdf  Dawson chapter.pdf  Patterson.pdf  MintzPrice.pdf
10/11	No Class	Watch <i>Twelve Years a Slave</i> (Steve McQueen, 2013) on your own before class on 10/17 . On reserve at Fenwick; available to rent on Amazon; available to borrow from many local libraries.	
10/13	Discussion	Kirsten E. Wood, "Gender and Slavery," <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) Michael Tadman, "Internal Slave Trades" <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) Sharon Block, "The Lines of Color, Sex, and Service: Comparative Sexual Coercion in Early America," in Martha Hodes, ed. <i>Sex, Love, Race</i> p141-63 Eugene Genovese and Douglas Ambrose, "Masters," in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 Block.pdf  WoodGenderSlavery.pdf  Tadman chapter.pdf  GenoveseAmbrose.pdf
10/18	Film Screening	<i>Last Supper</i> (Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, 1978)	
10/20	Discussion (Landsberg at conference?)	Enrico Dal Lago, "Comparative Slavery" in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) Matt D. Childs and Manuel Barcia, "Cuba," in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas</i> Edited by Mark M. Smith and Robert L. Paquette (pdf) James C. Scott, "Domination and the Arts of Resistance" (pdf) Michelle Reid, The Yoruba in Cuba: Origins, Identities and Transformations," in <i>Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World</i> . Edited by Falola, T., & Childs, M. D. (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 scott.pdf  Dal Lago chapter.pdf  ChildsBarcia.pdf  Reid Yoruba in Cuba.pdf
10/25	Film Screening	<i>Quilombo</i> (Carlos Diegues, 1984)	
10/27	Discussion	Jerry Dávila, <i>Dictatorship in South America</i> , Chap. 6 George Reid Andrews, "Brazilian Racial Democracy, 1900-90: An American Counterpoint," <i>Journal of Contemporary History</i> 31:3 (1996), 483-507. (pdf) Pedro Paulo A Funari and Aline Vieira de Carvalho, "Palmares: A Rebel Polity Through Archaeological Lenses" (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 Andrews.pdf  FunariVieiradeCarvalhoPalmares.pdf
Latin American Dictatorship: Remembering and Forgetting			
11/1	Film Screening	<i>Official Story</i> (Luis Puenzo, 1985) Paper #2 due (via email)	
11/3	Discussion	Dávila, Introduction and Chaps. 1, 3, and 5 Emilio Crenzel, "Between the Voices of the State and the Human Rights Movement: Never Again and the Memories of the Disappeared in Argentina," <i>Journal of Social History</i> 44:4 (2011), 1063-1076. (pdf) Weekly Writing due	 Crenzel.pdf
11/8	Film Screening	<i>Garage Olimpo</i> (Marco Bechis, 1999)	
11/10	Discussion	Luis Roniger and Mario Sznajder, "The Politics of Memory and Oblivion in Redemocratized Argentina and Uruguay," <i>History& Memory</i> 10:1 (1998), 133-69. Susana Kaiser, "Escraches: Demonstrations, Communication, and Political Memory in Post-dictatorial Argentina," <i>Media, Culture and Society</i> 24 (2002), 499–516. (pdf) Claudia Feld, "Image and Disappearance in Argentina. Reflections on a Photo taken in the Basement of ESMA," <i>Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies: Travesía</i> 21:2 (2012), 313-41. Weekly Writing due	 RonigerSznajder.pdf  KaiserEscraches.pdf  Feld.pdf
11/15	Screening/Discussion	Dávila, Chap. 4 Steve Stern, "Memory: The Curious History of a Cultural Code Word," <i>Radical History Review</i> 124 (2016), 117-28. Screening of <i>Bear Story</i> (Gabriel Osorio Vargas, 2014) https://vk.com/video244132350_171200778 Use Google Chrome as your browser.	 Stern.pdf
11/17	Film Screening	<i>Machuca</i> (Andrés Wood, 2004)	
11/22	Discussion	Margaret Power, "More than Mere Pawns: Right-Wing Women in Chile," Journal of Women's History 16:3 (2004), 138-51. (pdf) Marcelo Casals, "The Insurrection of the Middle Class: Social Mobilization and Counterrevolution during the Popular Unity Government, Chile, 1970–1973," <i>Journal of Social History</i> 54:3 (2021), 944-69 Weekly Writing due	 PowerRightWomen.pdf  Casals.pdf
11/24	No Class-Thanksgiving		
11/29	Film Screening	<i>No</i> (Pablo Larraín, 2012) Take-Home Exam to be distributed.	
12/1	Discussion	Dávila, Chap. 7 Patricio Silva, "Doing Politics in a Depoliticised Society: Social Change and Political Deactivation in Chile," <i>Bulletin of Latin American Research</i> 23:1 (2004), 63-78. Weekly Writing due	 Silva.pdf
12/?		Take-Home Final Exam Due (via email)	

If you are citizen of an European Union member nation, you may not use this service unless you are at least 16 years old.

Dokkio Sidebar (from the makers of PBworks) is a Chrome extension that eliminates the need for endless browser tabs. You can search all your online stuff without any extra effort. And Sidebar was **#1 on Product Hunt!** [Check out what people are saying by clicking here.](#)

VIEW

EDIT

☆

Weekly Writing Instructions

last edited by PBworks 2 months, 3 weeks ago

Page history

For 10 of the 14 weeks in the semester, you will write an analytical response to one of the readings assigned for that week. You choose which 10 weeks you will write. Your task is to identify, and then summarize, the author's main argument. Once you have done this, you will then connect the author's argument to the week's film. You will need to explain how, and in what ways, the film is making a similar or different argument. This should be 1–2 pages and will be turned in at the beginning of class.

[History at the Movies](#)

[Syllabus and Readings](#)

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