GEM2005/HY2243 Film and History
Syllabus 2003-2004
See also module web page:

Lecturers: A/P Ian Gordon and Dr. Tim Barnard

Venue: LT 11 Monday 4pm – 8pm

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Through a study of film this module will examine the interpretation of history in film, and contrast filmic representation of history with printed sources. Students will critically evaluate a set of issues regarding film and history such as: What light do films shed on the past? How reliable are films as the grounds for making inferences about the past? What are the similarities and differences in the criteria for the critical evaluation of historical films and the historian's accounts of the past? The module is for students with an interest in film as a form of social expression.

2. On completion of this module students should be able to:

- Initiate, conduct, and present findings on an aspect of film and history.
- Develop and present arguments in a critical assessment of the ways in which popular films represent the past.
- Deploy appropriate methodologies to evaluate the tension between social events and the representation of them in film.
- Appreciate the debates over the interaction between the personal and the social in film.
- Grasp the diverse genres that have characterised filmic depictions of social and cultural phenomena over the twentieth century, the context of twentieth-century cinema, and the contexts that shape the subjects of the films viewed and appreciate the methodologies that have produced this knowledge.

MODES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Four hour lecture-film showing. Students will read prior to the lectures and can use the remainder of the session to discuss in groups issues raised by the films. Group discussions will primarily occur outside the classroom through the IVLE.

SYNOPSIS

The module will commence with an introductory session covering methodological and
theoretical issues regarding film and history. This will be followed by three themed areas of filmic representation covering such topics as: the Great Depression, Fascism/the Holocaust/World War II, the Cold War, the Vietnam War; Roman Empire, Nationalism and Anti-colonialism. Students will study up to twelve popular films from a variety of countries possibly including America, Australia, Britain, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, and Vietnam. In 2003-2004 the three themed areas are: Searching For Truth; Defense and Fear in Asia; and The Cold War.

**SYLLABUS**

**Part I Introduction (1 week)**
*Key Issues of Film and History (Week 1: August 11)*

**Part II Searching for Truth (4 weeks)**
* 1) *Ali - Boma Ye* (Week 2: August 18)  
  Film: *When We Were Kings*
* 2) *The Greatest* (Week 3: August 25)  
  Film: *Ali*
* 3) *British Justice?* (Week 4: September 1)  
  Film: *Breaker Morant*
* 4) *The Truth and the Rashomon Effect* (Week 5: September 8)  
  Film: *Rashomon* (1950)

**Part III Defense and Fear in Asia (2 weeks)**
* 1) *Martial Arts and Chinese Nationalism* (Week 6: September 15)  
  Film: *Iron Monkey*
* 2) *Japan and the Samurai Spirit* (Week 7: September 22)  
  Film: *Seven Samurai*

**Part IV The Cold War (6 weeks)**
* 1) *Precious Bodily Fluids* (Week 8: September 29)  
  Film: *Dr Strangelove*
* 2) *Imminent Danger* (Week 9: October 6)  
  Film: *Thirteen Days*
* 3) *Americans Don't Invade, They Liberate* (Week 10: October 13)  
  Film: *The Quiet American*
* 4) *Sukarno, Australians, and the Asian Horde* (Week 11: October 20)  
  Film: *The Year of Living Dangerously*
* 5) *It's a Conspiracy* (Week 12: October 27)  
  Film: *The Manchurian Candidate*
6) I Know But What's Your Name (Week 13: November 3)
Film: Goldfinger

ASSessment

The assessment in this module will be entirely continuous, without a final exam.

CA: 100%:

Students must complete five (5) out of a possible six (6) assignments/projects. On average, assignment/project every second week.

5 Projects (50%)
Discussion Group participation every week (25%)
Essay due in week 12 (25%)

TEXT AND READINGS

All the essential readings will be available online through the IVLE.

Core reading:

Week 1 (Required Reading, prior to class)

Week 2 (Required Reading, prior to class)
Essential:
Reel to Reel: When We Were Kings: http://www.filmeducation.org/secondary/s_archive/documentary/wwwKings/

Additional:

Week 3 (Required Reading, prior to class)
Essential:
Secrets

**Additional:**

**Week 4 (Required Reading, prior to class)**

**Essential:**

**Additional:**

**Week 5 (Required Reading, prior to class)**

**Essential:**
"Rashomon" by Ryunosuke Akutagawa in *Rashomon: Criterion Collection DVD.*
"In a Grove" by Ryunosuke Akutagawa in *Rashomon: Criterion Collection DVD.*

**Additional:**

**Week 6 (Required Reading, prior to class)**

**Essential:**
"A Brief Historical Tour of the HK Martial Arts Film"
http://www.brightlightsfilm.com/31/hk_brief1.html
Mark Pollard, "Wong Fei Hung: The Man & the Legend"
http://www.kungfucinema.com/articles/2001-04-08-01.htm

**Additional:**

**Week 7: (Required Reading, prior to class)Essential:**

**Week 8: (Required Reading, prior to class)**

**Essential:**

**Additional:**

**Week 9: (Required Reading, prior to class)**
**Essential:**
“The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 18-29, 1962” at: http://www.hpol.org/jfk/cuban/
Or the real audio files of Kennedy et al at:
http://www.hpol.org/master.asp?t=search&type=title&value=cuba&Submit=Submit

**Week 10 (Required Reading, prior to class)**
**Essential:**

**Additional:**

**Week 11 (Required Reading, prior to class)**
**Essential:**
**Additional:**

**Week 12 (Required Reading, prior to class)**
**Essential:**

**Week 13 (Required Reading, prior to class)**
**Essential:**

**Additional:**