AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

[A copy of the syllabus is available for download from the workbin.]

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

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.

SCHEDULE

Lecture and Film Showing: Monday 4pm to 8pm (or when the film finishes).
LT11.
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, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

SYLLABUS
Part I Introduction (1 week)
Introduction: Key Issues in Film and History (Week 1: August 8)

Part II History, Narrative and Memory (5 weeks)
1) "I'm a Rocker; I'm a Rebel, like Everyone Else" (Week 2: August 15)
   Film: Merchants of Cool (2000)

2) "I'm a Trend Pimp": Pop Music and Consumerism (Week 3: August 22)
   Film: Josie and the Pussycats (2001)

3) Who do you Believe?: The Rashomon Effect (Week 4: August 29)
   Film: Rashomon (1950)

4) What do you Remember?: Information about the Past (Week 5: September 5)
   Film: Memento (2000)

5) Why do you Remember?: Memory and the Past (Week 6: September 12)
   Film: Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004)

Part III East Meets West (2 weeks)
1) Bond in Asia (Week 7: September 26)
   Film: You Only Live Twice (1967)

2) Asia in Hollywood (Week 8: October 3)
   Film: Kill Bill, Volume 1 (2003)

Part IV Choice, the City and History (5 weeks)
1) The City and Its Elite (Week 9: October 10)
   Film: The Age of Innocence (1993)

2) The City and Power (Week 10: October 17)
   Film: The Godfather (1972)

3) The City and Its Margins (Week 11: October 24)
   Film: Do the Right Thing (1989)

4) Gotham and the Imaginary City (Week 12: October 31)
   Film: Batman (1989)
5) Everyman a King: Creation of the American Ideal  (Week 13: November 7 )
Film: Viva Las Vegas (1964)

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

CA: 100%:
Students must complete five (5) assignments/projects. On average, assignment/project every second week.

5 Projects (50%)
Project 1 due noon Friday August 26
Project 2 due noon Friday September 16
Project 3 due noon Friday October 7
Project 4 due noon Friday October 28
Project 5 due noon Friday November 11

Discussion Group participation every week (25%)


TEXTS & READINGS
All the essential readings will be available online through the IVLE under: Library eReserve. Be sure to download and save the reading because each individual student can only access it once through the Library eReserve.

Core reading: (Under each project question, there will be a main reading. For each film, there will be supplemental readings and films. All key readings are available through the IVLE)

Week 1 (Required Reading, prior to class)

PROJECT 1: Constructing History

Week 2 (Merchants of Cool):

Week 3 (Josie and the Pussycats)

Additional Films of interest and relevance (Week 2 and 3):
How to Get Ahead in Advertising (1989)

PROJECT 2: Memory and History

Week 4 (Rashomon)

Week 5 (Memento)

Week 6 (Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind)
Alexander Pope, "From Eloisa to Abelard": http://www.monadnock.net/poems/eloisa.html
Steven Johnson, "The Science of Eternal Sunshine": http://slate.msn.com/id/2097502

Additional Films of interest and relevance (Weeks 4, 5 and 6):
Wonderland (2003)
Hero (2003)
Run Lola Run (1999)
Breaker Morant (1981)

PROJECT 3: Asia in Western Film
Hugh Cortazzi, "Asian Values May Not Be Particularly Asian": http://www.sfdonline.org/sfd/Link%20Pages/Link%20Folders/Human%20Rights/values.html

Week 7 (You Only Live Twice)

Week 8 (Kill Bill, Vol. 1)
John Powers, "Once Upon a Time in the East: Quentin Tarantino's Kill Bill (or half of it, anyway)", LA Weekly, 10-16 October 2003.

**Additional Films** that may be of interest:
Fist of Fury (1972)
The Man with the Golden Gun (1974)

**PROJECT 4: History and Choice: New York City**

Week 9 (**The Age of Innocence**)  

Week 10 (**The Godfather**)  

Week 11 (**Do the Right Thing**)  

**Additional Films** that may be of interest:
The Godfather II (1974)

**PROJECT 5: The Imaginary City**

Week 12 (**Batman**)  

Week 13 (**Viva Las Vegas**)  