



**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

HISTORY

HIST318 – Special Topic: History on Film/Film on History

TRIMESTER 1 2012

5 March to 4 July 2012

Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 5 March to 8 June 2012

Mid-trimester break: 6–22 April 2012

Study week: 11–15 June 2012

Examination/Assessment Period: 15 June to 4 July 2012

Withdrawal dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawlsrefunds.aspx>

Names and contact

Course Coordinator: Dr. Giacomo Lichtner

Room: OK 425

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Office Hours: **Wednesday 9.00-11.00**

Class times and locations

Lecture: Tuesday, 15.10-16.00 MYLT220

Tutorial venues (from week 2): during week 1 you will be asked to sign up for one of the following classes:

Tuesday 12-1.50 in VZ 103

Wednesday 10.00-11.50 CO 118

Wednesday 3.10-5.00 OK 301

Extra Tutorial (subject to student numbers): Thursday 3.10-5 KK203

Film screening (from week 2): Tuesday, 16.10-18.00 MYLT220

Course delivery

The delivery of this course consists of one one-hour lecture and one two-hour tutorial per week. In addition, students are required to watch a film each week either in the allocated class screening or privately. Students will be required to sign up to a tutorial during the first week of the semester. Tutorial preparation each week involves the analysis of a film and of written material as required.

Communication of additional information

Additional information or information on changes during the course will be posted on the History Programme glass notice board (level 4, Old Kirk Building), announced in lectures and on Blackboard.

Course Prescription

This course explores the relationship between History and the Moving Image. Drawing from case studies from four different continents, the course will engage with the theory and practice of cinema's dual role as mirror and catalyst of social trends, as well as with the medium's ability to shape historical consciousness.

Course content

'History on Film/Film on History' is designed to investigate the many facets of the interaction between history and film. The study of Cinema as historical evidence has been a recognised branch to the historical discipline since the late 1970s, but controversy persists on the exact usefulness of film as a source. HIST318 covers the main theoretical approaches that have been designed to harness cinema as a source in the study of history and the students will be faced with a variety of case studies from both fictional and documentary film and from numerous national cinemas. The course is divided in four sections which tackle all aspects of the 'Film and History' field:

1. Film as Historiophoty
2. Film as Primary Source
3. Film as Vector of Memory
4. Film as Historical Agent

In exploring these concepts through specific case studies, the course allows the student to engage critically with film as historical evidence: as commentary on the past; as commentary on the present; as a medium in the construction of national historical narratives; as a privileged tool of 20th Century political propaganda.

Learning objectives

The primary objective of 'History on Film/Film on History' is to offer a thorough analysis of the theories surrounding the relationship between history and the moving image and provide students with the critical means to assess these theories. In order to achieve this, the course uses a diverse set of case, designed to give students a sense of the complexity of this relationship and, at the same time, to expose them to less familiar forms of cinema.

Students will be expected to become familiar with the key concepts of 'Film and History' and with some aspects of filmmaking, in particular in regard to be able to assess how aesthetic and stylistic choices affect the political and historical interpretation offered by a given film. Students of HIST318 will become familiar with the empirical study of film as a primary source. As they become familiar with these theoretical and practical issues, students will be expected to identify a topic of investigation and develop it into a research essay, using primary and secondary sources in a manner appropriate to 300-level History courses.

Students passing the course should be able to:

- Master the different ways in which History and film interact;

- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of existing approaches;
- Evaluate the extent to which film has contributed to popular understanding of history in specific contexts;
- Develop further skills in analysing primary materials including moving and still images;
- Improve their ability to weigh up conflicting arguments and make reasoned judgements about their relative merits; and
- Consolidate a high level of competency in written and oral communication, and historiographical analysis

Graduate attributes

All History courses contribute to understanding the development of the historical discipline.

For more details please consult our website

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/about/hist-overview.aspx#grad-attributes>

Expected workload

In accordance with Faculty of Humanities and Social Science guidelines, the overall workload for this course is 200 hours in total. Over the course of the trimester students are expected to spend 200 hours on tasks including: class contact hours, preparation for tutorials/seminars and the completion of assignments.

Readings

Essential texts:

There is no prescribed textbook for HIST318: 'History on Film/Film on History'. An electronic Book of readings will be compiled to aid the students' preparation for tutorials. These readings will be available each week through the Library's HIST318 Course Reserve and through Blackboard.

In addition to the prescribed weekly readings, all students will benefit from becoming familiar with key theoretical works, in particular by Robert Rosenstone, Marnie Hughes-Warrington, Pierre Sorlin, André Bazin and others. A thematic bibliography for the course will be available on Blackboard and distributed during Week 1 as an appendix to this course guide.

Recommended Reading:

Robert Rosenstone, *Revisioning History* (Princeton: 1995)

Id., *History on Film/Film on History* (London: 2006)

Marnie Hughes-Warrington, *History Goes to the Movies* (Abingdon: 2007)

Pierre Sorlin, *The Film in History: Restaging the Past* (Oxford: 1980)

Assessment requirements

The assessment procedure aims to establish that the students have gained a good overall understanding of the ways in which film and history interact, and that they have developed an in-depth knowledge of one specific aspect within the broader field. Students will be expected to become familiar with relevant theories around film and history as well as master their application through case studies selected both by the lecturer and by the students themselves. To these ends, students of HIST318 will be asked to set the scene with a historiographical essay on film and history, and then apply the theories studied to an extensive research essay. Moreover, a small percentage of the final mark will be determined by students' contribution

to the tutorials, during which each student will be expected to engage with the main themes and take part in their discussion.

(a) **In-class contribution** worth **10%** of the final grade.

This assignment assesses the student's overall contribution to the tutorials. Students are expected to offer a sustained contribution to their class by engaging weekly with the debates raised in readings, visual sources and discussion. On at least one occasion during the course, each student will be asked to assume responsibility for a given topic and offer a short presentation to the class. This part of the assessment package is designed to maximise learning and ensure that your oral communication skills are developed alongside your written ones. This is a space to give you the confidence to put forward your ideas and consider them in the light of your peers' responses.

In assessing your work, the marker will be looking for the following:

1. A strong grasp of the relevant sources; the ability to answer questions;
2. Inquisitiveness and intellectual curiosity; an informed personal opinion and the ability to go beyond the week's readings;
3. Fluent communication skills; the clear exposition of your argument;
4. Respect for the opinions of others;
5. A sustained participation in in-class debates throughout the course.

(b) **Historiographical Essay** (1,500 words), worth **20%**,

Deadline: Friday 27 April 2012.

The essay requires the student to master the range of arguments that have been offered by scholars trying to rationalise the relationship between history and film. The historiographical essay will offer an overview of existing theories and critically assess their respective strengths and weaknesses. This assignment enables students to organise intellectually ideas around the subject and thus provides them with the ideal theoretical framework from which to tackle the research essay.

In assessing your work, the marker will consider the extent to which:

1. You have been able to select and understand the most important sources;
2. You have assessed the literature critically;
3. You have weighed scholars' arguments in relation to each other;
4. You have expressed your argument clearly;
5. You have employed competently the referencing and footnoting standards of the discipline.

(c) **Research Essay**, (of minimum 3000 and maximum 4000 words), worth **40%**:

Deadlines: Thursday 5 April (Proposal); Monday 21 May (Final Essay)

The research essay tests your ability to

1. identify a suitable topic;
2. develop the idea within a clear intellectual framework;
3. research the project through the appropriate use of secondary and primary sources;
4. complete the essay according to given time and length limits, using clear and confident prose, and appropriate referencing.

To this end you will first complete a **Research Proposal, due no later than Thursday 5 April.**

The **research proposal** is designed to assist the student in identifying and developing a suitable research project. Students will be provided with a template they can choose to adopt. The proposal is expected to provide: a working title for the essay; a brief explanation of the proposed topic; a set of clear and specific research questions; lists of primary and secondary sources. In completing the proposal, the student will be expected to:

1. Apply critical thinking to the selection of a feasible topic;
2. Display a good understanding of the range of sources that will be needed to complete the research project successfully;
3. Demonstrate the ability to plan ahead and organise one's thoughts and workload.

The proposal is not assessed but is part of the requirements for your research essay.

Research Essay is due on Monday 21 May.

By completing the **research essay**, students will demonstrate their ability to design and complete an independent research project to a standard appropriate to 300-level study. Having selected and agreed with the course coordinator a viable and interesting research topic, students will carry out primary and secondary research to refine and answer their specific research questions. Although some supervision will be available, the research essay invests you with the responsibility to manage your own work and in particular your own time: you will need to devise an appropriate research and writing schedule. This assignment tests your ability to select, understand and organise relevant secondary literature, deal with complex historical issues and submit a finished piece of work that is accomplished both in form and content.

The essay will be judged according to the student's ability to:

1. Engage critically with a broad range of relevant secondary sources and place the topic within its specific historiographical context;
2. Identify, assess and utilise appropriately relevant primary sources;
3. Build and sustain a coherent argument, developed consistently through the essay;
4. Develop a coherent structure, backed by consistent and rational paragraphing;
5. Present complex ideas clearly, through a fluent, accurate and articulate prose;
6. Employ comprehensive referencing: appropriate footnoting and an appropriate bibliography.

(d) **In-class Test, worth 30%** to be held during the last lecture slot (2 hours)

Deadline: Tuesday 2 June, 3.10-5.00; MYLT220

The test is designed to assess the student's overall understanding of the course and to what extent the learning objectives have been achieved. Accordingly, students are most likely to succeed in this task if they have attended class consistently and contributed actively to the learning process. The test is designed to showcase a different set of skills, such as:

1. A good grasp of Film and History, its theoretical and methodological challenges
2. A good understanding of the key issues in the relationship between Film and History
3. A good overall command of films and readings analysed in this course
4. The ability to think laterally and make links between different yet related topics
5. The ability to think critically, using your knowledge to devise a personal answer to a set question
6. The ability to think quickly and write a coherent and concise answer in a given time
7. The ability to draw examples from films and employ them as evidence in the exposition of your argument

To give you a chance to prove these skills, the test will be in essay form: you will be required to answer a broad thematic question and analyse a film sequence. Further guidance on how to prepare and what to expect will be given in tutorials and, especially, in the revision tutorial held on week 11.

Penalties

History Programme policy stipulates that late submission of essays is penalised. Students lose 5% for the first day late and 2% thereafter for a maximum of 10 weekdays. After 10 days, work can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but will not be marked. Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances, but **all extensions require the student to provide documentation**. If granted an extension, students must agree to a new due date. Contact your tutor as soon as a problem emerges. Extension forms are available in the History Programme office.

Note that **Friday, 8 June** is the final date on which any written work can be accepted by the Programme, because this is the date on which we must certify whether students have met the course requirements. The provision for late submission with penalty does not apply beyond this date.

Mandatory course requirements

To pass the course each student must:

1. Attendance in **at least 7** of the 10 tutorials;

AND

2. Complete the assignments specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)

Faculty guidelines permit you to miss up to 3 tutorials without penalty. Extra absences will result in a student failing terms, except in cases of serious illness (supported by a medical certificate), or serious personal crisis. **THERE IS NO PROVISION IN THIS COURSE FOR MAKE-UPS TO COMPENSATE FOR ADDITIONAL ABSENCES EXCEPT UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES.** You should allow for the possibility of unforeseen illness when using up your quota of permissible absences.

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator, tutors and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

Statement on legibility

Students are expected to write clearly. Where work is deemed 'illegible', the options are:

- the student will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame after which penalties will apply;
- the student will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) and lateness penalties apply;
- if the student does not transcribe it to an acceptable standard, the work will be accepted as 'received' (so any associated mandatory course requirements are met) but not marked.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

Lecture Programme

1. **6 March** **Introduction: Theoretical approaches to ‘History and Film’**
2. 13 March Historiophoty: can film make a historiographical argument?
3. **20 March** **‘It is as it was’: Accuracy and the Historical Film**
4. 27 March The *moving* image: Emotions and the Historical Film
5. **3 April** Film and Memory I
- 6-22 April: Mid-Semester Break
6. 24 April Film and Memory II
7. **1 May** The historical film as allegory
8. 8 May The Analysis of Film Reception
9. **15 May** Propaganda I: reinventing the past
10. 22 May Propaganda II: Newsreels
11. **29 May** The Final Cut’: film and history in perspective.
12. 2 June **In-Class Test**