



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

**HISTORY PROGRAMME**  
**HIST 423: A Topic in Historiography and Historical Method 2:**  
**Film and History**

**TRIMESTER 1 and 2 2012**  
**5 March to 17 November**

**Trimester dates**

Teaching dates: 5 March to 19 October 2012

Mid-trimester breaks: 6–22 April 2012 and 27 August – 7 September 2012

Mid-year break: 11 June – 15 July 2012

**Withdrawal dates**

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

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

**Names and contact details**

**Course Coordinator:** Dr Giacomo Lichtner

**Room:** OK 425

**Phone:** 463 6756

**Office Hours:** Wednesday 9.00-11.00 (or by appointment)

**Email:** giacomo.lichtner@victoria.ac.nz

**Class times and locations**

Seminar time and venue: Thursday 10.00-12.00, OK 406 (fortnightly)

Film screening: Thursday 12.00-14.00 (weekly)

**Course delivery**

Students are expected to attend and contribute to fortnightly two-hour seminars and attend weekly film screenings (or arrange private viewing times as applicable). Participation in the seminars involves discussion of given themes based on each student's in-depth analysis of readings and films.

**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 is designed to explore the different ways in which history and film interact, how filmmakers use history in their trade and vice-versa, and how the study of history can profit from using the moving image.

**Course content**

The context of the course will be the Holocaust, however the cinematographic texts will be employed not as sources for knowledge about the Shoah, but in the study of how this has been interpreted in different times and places, as well as by different film genres. The historical understanding that it produces is thus of a different kind. The analysis of the films' reception and of their choices in terms

of representation will highlight issues of politics, ideology, myth-building and the shifting taboos of modern societies. Adopting a thematic approach, in the first trimester the course will discuss issues concerning fiction films and the Holocaust, comparing alternative solutions to representational problems. In the second semester, we will turn to documentary filmmaking and address some of the issues surrounding the medium and its relation with historical research, such as varying rigorous use of footage.

### **Learning objectives**

This course is designed to explore the different ways in which history and film interact, how filmmakers use history in their trade and, vice versa, and how the study of history can profit from using the moving image as source. The course will cover the representation of history in film, but also cinema as evidence of social and political attitudes to history, and the reception of films in the study of how these attitudes change with time. Similarly, the material used will include works from several countries, covering most genres, and fiction as well as documentary. The aim of this course is to increase the students' historical understanding of post-war societies' relationship with their past, while discussing methodologies for the study of representation and the reception of films. Moreover the course hopes to stimulate the students' awareness of the potential and dangers of using film in historical research, as well as their critical thinking with regards to both film and history.

Students passing the course should be able to understand satisfactorily:

- how film can be used to convey a particular version of history or make a political statement
- how films shape our understanding of history while at the same time being shaped themselves by the society of which they are a product
- how to analyse critically a film in relation to its historical content
- key concepts in film criticism
- key issues in the post-war representation of the Holocaust

### **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 300 hours in total. Over the course of the trimester students are expected to spend 300 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 HIST423. Readings for each meeting will be distributed in hard and electronic copy to aid the students' preparation for tutorials.

In addition to the prescribed readings, students may benefit from becoming familiar with key works on Holocaust representation, especially Annette Insdorf's and Joshua Hirsch's books. A brief list of sources follows.

#### **Recommended Reading:**

Hirsch, Joshua Francis, *Afterimage: film, trauma, and the Holocaust*, Philadelphia, 2004.  
PN1995.9 H53 H669 A

Pollock, Griselda and Silverman, Max eds, *Concentrationary Cinema*. Oxford, 2012.

Flanzbaum, Hilene, *The Americanization of the Holocaust*, Baltimore, 1999.  
D804.45 U55 A514

Baron, Lawrence, *Projecting the Holocaust into the present: the changing focus of contemporary Holocaust cinema*, Lanham, 2005.  
PN1995.9 H53 B265 P

Bartov, Omer, *The "Jew" in cinema: from The golem to Don't touch my Holocaust*,  
Bloomington, 2005.  
PN1995.9 J46 B293 J

Perra, Emiliano, *Conflicts of memory: the reception of Holocaust films and TV programmes in Italy, 1945 to the present*, Oxford, 2010.  
DS135 I8 P47 2010

Lichtner, Giacomo, *Film and the Shoah in France and Italy*, London, 2008.  
PN1995.9 H53 L699 F

Haggith, Toby and Newman, Joanna eds, *Holocaust and the moving image*,  
London, 2005.  
PN1995.9 H754

Ginsberg, Terri, *Holocaust film: the political aesthetics of ideology*, Middlesex, 2007.  
PN1995.9 H53 G493 H

Doneson, Judith E., *The Holocaust in American film*, Syracuse, 2002.  
PN1995.9 H53 D681 H 2ed

Colombat, Andre, *The Holocaust in French film*, Metuchen, 1993.  
PN1995.9 H53 C718 H

Insdorf, Annette, *Indelible shadows: film and the Holocaust*, Cambridge, 1989.  
PN1995.9 H53 I59 I

Marcus, Millicent Joy, *Italian film in the shadow of Auschwitz*,  
PN1995.9 H53 M322 I

Avisar, Ilan, *Screening the holocaust: cinema's images of the unimaginable*,  
Bloomington, 1988.  
PN1995.9 H53 A958 S

### **Assessment requirements**

Assessment in this course will be based on the following:

- (a) One **essay proposal**, worth **5%** of the final grade.  
**Deadline: Monday 19 May, 5pm.**
- (b) One **Research Essay**: of 5000 words, worth **50%** of the final grade.  
**Deadline: Thursday 20 September, 5pm.**

(c) -- One **review essay**: of 1500 words, worth **15%**.  
**Deadline: 7 June.**

**The review essay asks the student to choose and analyse one Holocaust film made after 2001 in the light of the representational trends, recurrent themes and challenges discussed in the semester.**

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

1. A coherent and well-developed argument, expressed consistently through the essay;
2. A fluent, clear and articulate prose; the clear expression of complex ideas;
3. A coherent structure, backed by consistent and rational paragraphing ;
4. The successful contextualisation of the chosen film within the broader issue of the representability of the Holocaust;
5. A critical and personal engagement with the film;
6. An analysis of the relationship between the film's aesthetic choices and its historical and political message.

(c) **One oral presentation:** worth **10%** of the final grade.

**Deadlines vary.**

(d) **One in-class test:** worth **20%** of the final grade (2 hours).

The test will take place in the last seminar slot, **on 15 October.**

#### **Further details regarding each piece of assessment.**

(a) **One essay proposal, worth 10% of the final grade.**

**Deadline: Monday 19 May, 5pm.**

This short assignment is designed to show:

1. that you have devised a research topic that is coherent and feasible within the given limits (5000word essay);
2. that you have a hypothesis you want to test, or a well-defined research question you want to explore;
3. that you have identified sufficient primary and secondary sources; will require

Your work should include the following:

1. An outline of the proposed essay topic
2. A paragraph engaging directly with the methodology
3. One or two clear and specific research questions; or a hypothesis you want to test
4. An annotated bibliography outlining the main primary and secondary sources you intend to use with a brief note on how they will be helpful. The secondary sources should include journal articles.

The proposal tests the following skills:

1. The ability to identify a coherent research project
2. The ability to develop the idea to proposal stage and assess its originality and feasibility
3. The ability to write synthetically and clearly

(b) **One Research Essay: of 5000 words, worth 50% of the final grade.**

**Deadline: Thursday 20 September, 5pm.**

The research essay tests your ability to organise your work and develop a medium-sized research project from a rough idea to an accomplished finished package.

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

7. A coherent and well-developed argument, expressed consistently through the essay. Does the essay answer the research question?
8. A fluent, clear and articulate prose; the clear expression of complex ideas
9. A coherent structure, backed by consistent and rational paragraphing
10. An appropriate and reasoned methodology; a sound use of the primary sources
11. A critical engagement with the secondary literature
12. Comprehensive referencing: appropriate footnoting and a comprehensive bibliography.

The following are general thoughts about essay-writing, which I hope may be useful to you.

### **Argument:**

- Decide what your argument is before you start writing; decide how you wish to express it and articulate it;
- Each essay needs an argument. This needs to be expressed with clarity and consistency; within a structure which should help the flow of the argument, by providing a logical link between the different points made in the essay;
- It can be pro-, against or neutral towards the topic; it can disagree with all sources or agree with one or more of them;
- If not many sources exist, that too can/should be part of your argument;
- Do not be afraid of discussing/criticising your sources; do not reject a source because it disagrees with you, but at the same time, do not simply accept that it is right and you are wrong;
- Your argument/s should be personal while suggesting that you have read and understood the relevant primary and secondary material.

### **Research:**

- You should read as widely as possible;
- If that is true, then anything you consult which is not obviously irrelevant must be referenced in a clear bibliography;
- Internet sources can only be referred to/used if they state the name of an author. In general, beware of Internet sources;
- Reception of film in particular is a tricky subject and very hard to prove irrefutably; make sure you acknowledge this difficulty and be very wary of sweeping statements or of claiming that your evidence is conclusive;
- **Some times the film is your evidence.** Then use it as you would any other text: its images (colour, editing, camera-angles etc.), its words (and silences), soundtrack (or lack of it) are all part of it. Use plenty of examples from the films you are discussing to back your point, but do not disregard examples which seem not disprove your point (films too can be contradictory).

### **Structure:**

- Your essay should have a beginning, a middle and an end, preferably in that order;
- Your paragraphs should not be too long;

- The style should be personal but clear; your prose concise, to the point and free of mistakes. More than being a problem in themselves, spelling, grammatical and syntactical mistakes slow down your argument and make it difficult for the reader to understand. In short, they make your work appear sloppy, even if it is not.
- Present your essay in a way that is 'tidy'. There is a surprisingly accurate link between the readability of an essay and the clarity of its writer's ideas;
- After you've finished your work, read it through to make sure it says what you want to say, and how you want to say it.

**(c) One oral presentation: worth 15% of the final grade.**

**Deadlines vary.**

The oral presentation is designed to encourage class contribution 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. The format (powerpoint; direct engagement with specific segments of a film etc.) and the style (handouts; standing or sitting) of your presentation are entirely up to you, but I would strongly recommend that you **do not read a pre-prepared speech**, as this often makes it very hard for your audience to follow you and interact with you.

The presentation will consist of a 10-15 minutes exposition devised by you (or you and your partner in case of a group presentation) to address the main points of the week's tutorial as **you** see them. The presentation should **NOT** simply sum up the argument of secondary sources or the plot of given films.

Your presentation should:

Be engaging

Set out your ideas clearly, at an appropriate pace and volume

Highlight the main issues as you see them

Encourage and attempt to lead the class towards a wider conversation around these issues

**(d) One in-class test: worth 25% of the final grade (2 hours)**

**Deadline: 15 October 2012.**

The test is designed to assess 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 filmic representation of the Shoah
3. The ability to think laterally and make links between different yet related topics
4. The ability to think critically, using your knowledge to devise a personal answer to a set question
5. The ability to think quickly and write a coherent and concise answer in a given time
6. 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, asking you to answer broad thematic questions.

### **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 working days. 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, 2 November** 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. Attend in **at least 9** of the 12 seminars;

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.

### **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](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress). Most statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://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](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).