

**Film, Power and American History: History 225g
Spring 2020**

Professor Vanessa R. Schwartz

10:00-11:50, M, W

Sections: Friday

THH 301

TAs: Simon Judkins (History, Visual Studies) and Joshua Poorman (History)

Schwartz Office Hours: Monday at noon and by appointment: vschwartz@usc.edu

Schwartz Office Location: THH 336

Simon Judkins Office Hours: 1-3 Fridays

Joshua Poorman Office Hours: 2-4 Mondays

TA Office Location: SOS 171

Course Description:

The goal of this class is to consider the history of the twentieth century as created by the existence of the movies and its institutions. This is not a class on American history through the movies. Instead, we will ask about the special role played by America in shaping the history of "the cinematic century." Hollywood has played a disproportionately large role in the history of the movies, including achieving global influence. This course is the story of how America came to dominate the world in part by capturing hearts and minds through a powerful form - at once art and document. We follow the emergence of Hollywood itself as a cosmopolitan and international center of film production. Hollywood is not nor has it ever been "America." We begin from the premise that the openness of Hollywood and the mobility (often forced) of foreign-born filmmakers who came to Hollywood made Hollywood into Hollywood. The class examines the history of the movies and its institutions and practices at the same time that it considers the enormous influence and impact of the movies on shaping the history of the twentieth century. The course suggests that the major social issues of the twentieth century were not only debated in the medium of film but also that film became a major social force since the advent of the movies, functioning as a center of power because of its mass nature.

General Education C: Social Analysis

At a time of rapid social, economic, and cultural transformation, both in the United States and globally, the insights of social analysis take on critical significance. The social sciences seek to explain the causes and consequences of a wide range of complex phenomena, including how individual and collective human action shapes and is shaped by economic organizations, political institutions, and social and cultural settings broadly understood. These phenomena include the role of gender, sexuality, race, class, and other aspects of identity across time and settings in the United States and the world. Courses in this area will introduce students to analytical approaches and methods of social sciences, quantitative and/or qualitative, and how these insights can be brought to bear to better understand our social world.

Class Format: We will meet twice weekly in a lecture format (with lots of materials being screened) and then once a week for discussion of the reading materials, screenings and lectures in section directed by the teaching assistants. Attendance three times a week is mandatory. We will check-in in class via blackboard. All readings and screenings are to be completed by Friday's discussion. Readings come from books made available for purchase or in the form of articles that are posted on the class Blackboard. Screening materials will be available on reserve in Leavey Library or via our vimeo website:
<https://vimeo.com/channels/history225g>.

Required Readings and Films:

Books for Purchase:

- Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies* (New York: Vintage Books and Toronto: Random House, 1994)
- Charney and Schwartz, eds. *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life* (UC Press, 1994)
- Vanessa Schwartz, *It's So French!: Hollywood, Paris, and the Making of Cosmopolitan Film Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007)

Articles on Blackboard:

- Boston Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. "Fighting a Vicious Film: Protest against 'The Birth of a Nation' (1915)." In Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts, eds. *Hollywood's America: United States Through Its Films*. St. James, New York: Brandywine Press, 1993, 79-80.
- Collier, John. "Cheap Amusements." *Charities and Commons* (11 April 1908). In Richard Abel, *The Red Rooster Scare: Making Cinema American, 1900-1910*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1999, 73-77.
- Currie, Barton W. "The Nickel Madness," *Harper's Weekly* (August 24, 1907). In Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts, eds. *Hollywood's America: United States Through Its Films*. St. James, New York: Brandywine Press, 1993, 76-78.
- Franklin, John Hope. "Silent Cinema as Historical Mythmaker." In Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts, eds. *Hollywood's America: United States Through Its Films*. St. James, New York: Brandywine Press, 1993, 42-52.
- Hulfish, David. "A Store-Front Theater Building," *Cyclopedia of Motion-Picture Work* (1911). In Richard Abel, *The Red Rooster Scare: Making Cinema American, 1900-1910*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1999, 77-79.
- James, David: *Rock and Film* (OUP, 2016), Introduction and Chapter 8 on Hard Days' Night.
- Kael, Pauline. "Bonnie and Clyde." *The New Yorker* (October 21, 1967), 147-171.
- Koppes, Clayton R., and Gregory D. Black. "What to Show the World: The Office of War Information and Hollywood, 1942-1945." *The Journal of American History* 64, no. 1 (June 1, 1977): 87-105
- Litwack, Leon F. "The Birth of a Nation." In Mark C. Carnes, ed. *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies*. New York: An Owl Book, Henry Holt and Company, 1996, 136-141.
- Maland, Charles J. "The Popular Front, *The Great Dictator*, and the Second Front, 1936-1942." In Charles J. Maland. *Chaplin and American Culture: The Evolution of a Star Image*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989, 159-186.
- Matuszewski, Boleslas, Laura U. Marks, and Diane Koszarski. "A New Source of History." *Film History* 7:3 (Autumn, 1995), 322-324.
- Menand, Louis. "Finding It at the Movies." *The New York Review of Books* (March 23, 1995).
- Menand, Louis. "Gross Points: Is the Blockbuster the End of Cinema?" *The New Yorker* (February 7, 2005).
- Menand, Louis. "Masters of the Matrix: Kennedy, Nixon, and the Culture of the Image." *The New Yorker* (January 5, 2004).
- Menand, Louis. "Paris, Texas: How Hollywood Brought the Cinema back from France." *The New Yorker* (February 17, 2003), 169-177.
- National Archives. Description of Photographic Unit from National Archives - Experiences in European Theater of Operations.
- Rabinowitz, Paula, "1930's Documentary and Visual Culture" in *The Wiley-Blackwell History of American Film*, pp. 133-155.
- Ross, Steven J., ed. *Movies and American Society*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2002, 14-37.

- Ross, Chapter One from *Hollywood, Left and Right* (Oxford, 2011).
- Scott, A. O. "Two Outlaws, Blasting Holes in the Screen." *New York Times* (August 12, 2007).
- Sontag, Susan. "The Decay of Cinema." *The New York Times* (February 25, 1996).
- *Variety* on "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" in Ross, 273-279

Out of Class Film Viewings:

- George Sloane Tucker, "Traffic in Souls" (1913) - from Giorgio Bertellini, *Perils of the new land: films of the immigrant experience (1910-1915)* - **LVYDVD 2524 disc 1; LVYDVD 2524 disc 2 (also streaming through Kanopy: Traffic in Souls (<https://usclib.kanopy.com/video/traffic-souls>))**
- Curtis, "In the Land of the Headhunters" (<https://youtu.be/73u7eugbbu8>)
- Charlie Chaplin, "The Great Dictator" (1940) - **LVYDVD 786 disc 1; LVYDVD 786 disc 2; (<https://usclib.kanopy.com/video/great-dictator>)**
- Christian Delage, "Nuremberg: The Nazis Facing their Crimes" (2006) - **LVYDVD 3728 disc 1; LVYDVD 3728 disc 2**
- US Department of Defense, "The Nazi Concentration Camps" (1945) - on the Delage DVD above, also on Amazon or Netflix.
- Walt Disney's "Fantasia" (1940) - **LVYDVD 294; on Disney+**
- Todd, Around the World in Eighty Days (1956): **LVYDVD 4691 discs 1 and 2**
- Richard Lester, "A Hard Day's Night" (1964) - **LVYDVD 1026 disc 1; LVYDVD 1026 disc 2; (<https://usclib.kanopy.com/video/hard-days-night>)**
- Bonnie and Clyde (1967) **LVYDVD6909 disc 1**

Video Links are also referred to in the weekly readings section if film is publicly available

IMPORTANT DUE DATES

- a) Paper One, 4-5 pages: February 22 in section
- b) In-Class Mid-term: Monday, March 9 in class
- c) Paper Two: 4-5 pages: Friday April 17 in section
- d) Final Exam: Monday, May 11, 8am to 10am

No late papers will be accepted. No missed exams will be accommodated unless there is a true emergency such as a documented death or severe illness.

GRADING DISTRIBUTION

First Paper: 15%

Mid-Term: 15%

Second Paper: 25%

Final: 30%

Participation: 15% (This grade includes attendance and making three post-class comments made on blackboard during the semester (sign-up in first section, as well as for your section participation).

Statement for Students with Disabilities: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with the Disability Services Program (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me by the third week of classes.

DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number is 213-740-0776. ability@usc.edu.

Statement on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: all work submitted must be your own. Cutting and pasting from the Internet is an especially common form of plagiarism. The instructor and TA's will enforce all university regulations in regard to the violation of policies related to academic integrity to the furthest extent. See <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/tig.pdf> for definitions of plagiarism.

Digital Etiquette Policy: The following policies have been developed with one thing in mind: the quality of your education. I do not seek to ban technology as such for there are many advantages to having a laptop and ipad and phone in the classroom and even internet access when it is fixed on the learning at hand. We will, for example, use Blackboard to check into lecture.

For the length of a class session you are expected to have no electronic connection to the internet and I urge you to take notes by hand rather than through the computer but I leave that up to students. **Other chores and tasks of life will simply have to wait.**

The classroom is a place where you leave your other worries and commitments behind for a fixed amount of time. When in doubt, please recall the principle that the use of all technology should specifically enhance and relate to the course.

The best studying also happens when you dedicate fixed off-line times. I highly recommend you do that at set times during the week. There are applications dedicated to this. For example: <http://anti-social.cc> or <https://macfreedom.com>

Phones: Please silence all phones or turn them off entirely. Do not put them on vibrate.

Laptops: Do not, during class: IM, look at Facebook, shop at Amazon or anywhere else, follow a game, respond to email. These behaviors distract you and those around you. Although multi-tasking is a skill, here we will work instead on lessons in focus and concentration.

Expectations regarding interaction with TA's and Instructor: If you email one of us you should expect a reply within 24 hours, Monday to Friday and within 48 hours on the week-end unless you receive an email explaining that we are unable to reply as quickly as usual due to travel or other reasons. Each of us has regular office hours and can also see you by scheduled appointment in our offices or via electronic video communication if the instructor determines that is most desirable.

Schedule of Lectures, Readings, Screenings and Discussions

Week One: Before the Movies Begin

Monday, January 13: Introduction: Mass Culture and Shaping America's Global Power in the 20th Century

Wednesday, January 15: Modern Life Before Film: Mobility, Machines and Mechanical Reproducibility

Read:

- Charney and Schwartz, *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*: Introduction, pp. 1-12; Singer, pp. 72-99; Rappaport, pp. 130-155.
- *Susan Sontag, "The Decay of Cinema," *The New York Times* (February 25, 1996)
- David Bordwell on Doing Film History:
<http://www.davidbordwell.net/essays/doing.php> (read up to A Case Study)

Friday, January 17: Discuss Readings

Week Two: The Birth of Cinema: Popular Realism

Monday, January 20: No Class: MLK Day

Wednesday, January 22: The Public Taste for Reality

Read:

- Charney and Schwartz, *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*: Schwartz, pp. 297-319; and Sandberg, 320-361
- Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, pp. 3-32

Friday, January 24: Discussion

Week Three: The Birth of Cinema: Mass Entertainment vs. Information

Monday, January 27: The Movies Begin:

In-Class Screenings: Lumière Brothers, Méliès Films, Zecca Film

Wednesday, January 29: Nickel Madness and New forms of Story-Telling

Screen in Class: "Life of a Fireman"

Read:

- *Barton W. Currie, "The Nickel Madness," *Harper's Weekly* (August 24, 1907), in Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts, eds., *Hollywood's America: United States Through Its Films* (St. James, New York: Brandywine Press, 1993), pp. 76-78
- *John Collier, "Cheap Amusements," *Charities and Commons* (11 April 1908) and David Hulfish, "A Store-Front Theater Building," *Cyclopedia of Motion-Picture Work* (1911) from Richard Abel, *The Red Rooster Scare: Making Cinema American, 1900-1910* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 73-79
- *Steven J. Ross, ed., *Movies and American Society* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), pp. 14-37

Friday, January 31: Discussion

Week Four: Social Problems, Social Significance

Monday, February 3: The Movies for the Common Good

Wednesday, February 5: Americans in the Making

Screen in Class: Emigrants Landing at Ellis Island, (1903), An American in the Making (1913) and Ramona (1910) (https://archive.org/details/Ramona_953)

Leavey library copy with Shelley Stamp Voice-Over: George Loane Tucker, "Traffic in Souls" (1913). Also for purchase: <https://www.amazon.com/Perils-New-Land-Immigrant->

[Experience/dp/B001A8HTXC/ref=pd_rhf_se_p_img_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=4P3CBD330WB7BQVEC6FA](http://www.kanopy.com/experience/dp/B001A8HTXC/ref=pd_rhf_se_p_img_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=4P3CBD330WB7BQVEC6FA) (also on Kanopy)

Read:

- Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, pp. 48-64
- *Whissel, "Regulating Mobility." in *Camera Obscura*, 17:1
- Noriega, Chon, "Birth of the Southwest" in Bernardi, *The Birth of Whiteness*, 203-225.
- http://www.fox.com/tcm%27s_race_hollywood_latino_images_in_film_ramona_1910

Friday, February 7: Discussion

Week Five: Writing History with Lightening

Monday, February 10: D.W. Griffith and the Birth of a Nation

Wednesday, February 12: In class Screenings: From D.W. Griffith, "Father of Film" and clips from "Birth of a Nation" and "Intolerance" (Schwartz out of town)

Read:

- *Leon F. Litwack, "The Birth of a Nation," in Mark C. Carnes, ed., *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* (New York: An Owl Book, Henry Holt and Company, 1996), pp. 136-141.
- *John Hope Franklin, "Silent Cinema as Historical Mythmaker," in Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts, eds., *Hollywood's America: United States Through Its Films* (St. James, New York: Brandywine Press, 1993), pp. 42-52
- *Boston Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, "Fighting a Vicious Film: Protest against 'The Birth of a Nation' " (1915) from Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts, eds., *Hollywood's America: United States Through Its Films* (St. James, New York: Brandywine Press, 1993), pp. 79-80
- Brody, "The Worst Thing about Birth of a Nation" in *New Yorker*. Feb. 1 2013
- *Boleslas Matuszewski, Laura U. Marks, and Diane Koszarski, "A New Source of History," *Film History* 7:3 (Autumn, 1995), pp. 322-324

Friday, February 14: Discussion

Week Six: History with Lightening II

Monday, February 17: No Class, President's Day

Watch Before Class on Monday: Great War on line:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRtdSoeYQYk&list=PL3H6z037pboEHxnyHECLD5881OH_FvPtF, at least EPISODES ONE and TWO...

Wednesday, February 19: WWI and film (Schwartz out of town)

Screen in Class:

Chaplin: "Shoulder Arms" Selections from Gance, "J'accuse" Selections from "The Battle of the Somme" Selections from "They Shall not Grow Old"

Read: <http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/a-few-thoughts-on-the-authenticity-of-peter-jacksons-they-shall-not-grow-old>

Friday, February 22: First paper due in section

Week Seven: The Rise of Hollywood

Monday, February 24: Going West! Hooray for Hollywood

Wednesday, February 26: Chaplin and the Power of Stars, Part One

Screen In-Class: Clips from: Brownlow, "Hollywood," "Robinson Intro to "Modern Times;"

Chaplin, "The Immigrant," "Shoulder Arms" and "Modern Times"

Read:

- Sklar, 67-103, 141-157
- McDonald, *The Star System*, pp.1-55
- Watch: Episodes 2 and 3: "TCM: Moguls and Movie Stars" Available on Amazon, Instant Video.

Friday, February 28: Discussion

Week Eight: The Extent of Star Power

Monday, March 2: Part Two Chaplin and Politics: Taking on the Dictator

In Class: From documentary, Brownlow, (2002) "The Tramp and the Dictator"

Wednesday, March 4: What is Documentary? (Schwartz out of town)

Watch:

- Charlie Chaplin, "The Great Dictator" (1940)

Read:

- Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, pp. 104-120
- *Charles J. Maland, "The Popular Front, *The Great Dictator*, and the Second Front, 1936-1942," in *Chaplin and American Culture: The Evolution of a Star Image* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 159-186.
- *Ross, Chapter One from *Hollywood, Left and Right*

Friday, March 6: Discussion of Chaplin

Week Nine: Mid-term Exam and Documenting Social Problems

Monday, March 9: Mid-Term Exam

Wednesday, March 11: Ethnography and Documentary: where drama and description collide (again)

Watch:

- Curtis, "In the Land of the Headhunters" (1914) stream on Amazon Prime: <https://www.amazon.com/Land-HeadHunters-Stanley-Hunt/dp/B016887802> see also: <https://curtisfilm.rutgers.edu/film/film-synopsis-mainmenu-33>
- "The City" (1939) <https://archive.org/details/CityTheP1939>; and Part two: https://archive.org/details/CityTheP1939_2

Read:

- Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, pp. 175-194 and pp. 215-246
- *Glass and Evans, "Consuming the *Head Hunters*: A Century of Film Reception," in *Return to the Land of the Head Hunters*, 146-166.

- *Evans, "Indian Movies and the Vernacular of Modernism," in *Return to the Land of the Head Hunters*, 190-211. ^[1]_{SEP}
- * Rabinowitz, Paula, "1930's Documentary and Visual Culture" in *The Wiley-Blackwell History of American Film*, pp. 133-155.

Friday, March 13: Discussion

March 14-22: Spring Break

Week Ten: World at War

Monday, March 23: Contributing to the War Effort

Clips from "From D-Day to Berlin" "Saving Private Ryan" "Bugs Bunny Nips the Nips" and "Private Snafu"

Wednesday, March 25: Filming Atrocity and Its Aftermath

In-Class Screening of "This is Your Life: Hannah Bloch Kohner"

Screen: Christian Delage, "Nuremberg: The Nazis Facing their Crimes" (2006) and US Department of Defense, "The Nazi Concentration Camps" (1945) - on the Delage DVD or stream at: <https://vimeo.com/pharesbalises/catalogue-cie-des-phares-et-balises/video/29089335>; and: https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B01DEG06OQ/ref=atv_dl_rdr (also Netflix)

Read:

- *Description of Photographic Unit from National Archives
- *Koppes, Clayton R., and Gregory D. Black. "What to Show the World: The Office of War Information and Hollywood, 1942-1945." *The Journal of American History* 64, no. 1 (June 1, 1977): 87-105.
- Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, 249-269

Friday, March 27: Discussion

Week Eleven: Where High Meets Low: Film Internationalism I

Monday, March 30: Disney... and Europe

Wednesday, April 1: Disney Screenings: "The Old Mill" and Selections from Fantasia

Read:

- Sklar, *Movie-Made America*, pp. 269-286
- *From Robin Allan, *Walt Disney and Europe*, p. 91-174

Friday, April 3: Discussion

Week Twelve: Cosmopolitanism and Global Film

Monday, April 6: Frenchness and American Film

Wednesday, April 8: The Scale of the World: Widescreen

Screen in class clips from "Lawrence of Arabia" "Ben Hur" "The Ten Commandments" and "The Sound of Music"

Read:

- Schwartz, *It's So French!* Ch. 1, 3 and 4

Watch:

- Mike Todd's "Around the World in Eighty Days" (1956): rent on amazon and elsewhere: https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B0038O9XOY/ref=atv_dl_rdr

Friday, April 10: Discussion

Week Thirteen: Youth, TV and the Movies

Monday, April 13: The Battle for the Nation's Youth: TV, Disneyland and Media Integration

Wednesday, April 15: The Rock and Roll Movie

***Watch:

- "Richard Lester, "A Hard Day's Night" (1964) before class (<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3xa5m9>)

Read:

- McDonald, *The Star System*, pp. 55-113
- *David James on Hard Days' Night
- Messenger, "Act Naturally" http://www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/firstrelease/fr_18/CMfr18a.html

Friday, April 17: Discussion

Second Paper Due in Class on Friday, April 17

Week Fourteen: New Waves

Monday, April 20: America Re-Makes French Films

Wednesday, April 22: The New Hollywood

Watch:

- "Bonnie and Clyde"

Read:

- *Pauline Kael, "Bonnie and Clyde," *The New Yorker* (October 21, 1967), pp. 147-171.
- *A. O. Scott, "Two Outlaws, Blasting Holes in the Screen," *New York Times* (August 12, 2007)
- *Louis Menand, "Finding It at the Movies," *The New York Review of Books* (March 23, 1995)
- *Louis Menand, "Paris, Texas: How Hollywood Brought the Cinema back from France," *The New Yorker* (February 17, 2003), pp. 169-177.

Friday, April 25: Discussion

Week Fifteen: Instant History: Seeing the Past from All the Angles

Monday, April 27: Social Turmoil and Media Matters

- Clip reel in class (Civil Rights and Feminism) on Blackboard Review of "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" and "Unmarried Woman" Info Guide

Wednesday, April 29: Liveness and Surveillance: Watching the President Die and O.J.'s Wild Ride

Read:

- Menand, "Masters of the Matrix" New Yorker (2004)
- *Air & Space* magazine: <https://www.airspacemag.com/history-of-flight/zoom-shot-57396049/?all>

Watch:

- <http://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000002563395/november-22-1963.html>
- <http://motherboard.vice.com/blog/the-other-shooter-the-saddest-and-most-expensive-26-seconds-of-amateur-film-ever-made>
- "O.J. Simpson: Made in America" https://www.amazon.com/I-Made-America-Part/dp/B01HIXWYKK/ref=sr_1_1?crd=38DBHS38G9S6D&keywords=oj+simpson+made+in+america&qid=1578055687&s=instant-video&sprefix=OJ+simpson+%2Cinstant-video%2C197&sr=1-1 (19.99 on Amazon for all 5 episodes)

Friday, May 1: Discussion

Final Exam: Monday, May 11, 8 am to 10 am