History, Film, and Violence: The Second World War

History 4485
Summer 2016
M-F 1-4:30
Pafford 206

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This course will explore cinematic portrayals of the Second World War produced by each of the main combatants. We will examine the ways in which filmmakers seek to understand and tell history through film, particularly the history of violence and political conflict. The feature films will be viewed in the order in which they were produced, allowing us to chart changes in both historical memory of the war and in film making. In addition to the feature films listed below we will view some additional contemporary films, fictional and non-fictional, as time permits.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate an ability to recognize and to pose significant historical questions, analyze sources critically, seek to understand the perspective of historical actors and to view those historical actors from a critical, scholarly perspective.
Class participation is an integral part of this class. Read the complete assignment before arriving and be prepared to discuss it in class.

Your grade in this course will be based on two essays on assigned topics (60%), a take-home final (30%), and class participation (10%). Paper due dates are noted below. I do not accept late or electronically submitted papers.

Please note that tape recording of lectures is not permitted.

**Required Reading:** Weinberg, *World War Two: A Very Short Introduction*

Additional readings on CourseDen

**Class Website/CourseDen:** The CourseDen page for this course is accessed via the My Courses link on the My UWG homepage. There you can access the syllabus, download assignments and exam review sheets, and find messages regarding the class. You must visit the online syllabus to download the documents listed below. Print them out and bring them with you to class on the dates listed below. Do not wait until the last minute to print these documents. Computer error is not an acceptable excuse for not having the documents on the assigned date.

**Statement on Plagiarism**

Please note that anyone committing plagiarism in any written assignment will earn an F for the course and may face further disciplinary action. Plagiarism is defined in the University of West Georgia Handbook as “representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own. Direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged.” Please see the UWG’s History Department statement on plagiarism at [http://www.westga.edu/~history/plagiarismhtm.htm](http://www.westga.edu/~history/plagiarismhtm.htm) and the UWG English Department’s guide for avoiding plagiarism at: [http://www.westga.edu/~engdept/Plagiarism/index.html](http://www.westga.edu/~engdept/Plagiarism/index.html).

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and university policy, I will make reasonable accommodation for any recognized disability. Students should
contact me during the first three weeks of the course and present documentation from the University’s Student Development Center.

Students, please carefully review the following information. It contains important material pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, and university accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Please Note/Fair Warning: Almost all of the films we will be viewing in this course contain graphic depictions of violence. Some also include scenes involving physical and/or mental cruelty, torture, and nudity/sexual situations. Those who are disturbed or offended by any of these themes should not take this class.

Course Schedule and Assignments:

May 9        Introduction/World War Two to 1942

May 10       World War Two, 1942-1945 / History and Film Discussion
Readings: Weinberg, Readings from CourseDen

May 11       Murderers Among Us (1946), Stalingrad (1993, clips)

May 12       Twelve O’Clock High (1949), Battle of Britain (1969, clips)

May 13       Sands of Iwo Jima (1949), Letters from Iwo Jima (2006, clips) Paper #1 Due

May 16       The Cranes are Flying (1957), Fall of Berlin (1950, clips)
May 17  
*Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), *Objective Burma!* (1945, clips)

May 18  

May 19  
*Das Boot* (1981)

May 20  
**Paper #2 Due**

May 23  
Band of Brothers, Episodes 2-4 (2001)

May 24  
Reading Day

May 25  
**Take Home Final Due**