

HILD 14: FILM AND HISTORY IN LATIN AMERICA

Michael Monteón

Spring, 2009

Office Hours, Tuesday 10-12

Class Location: Peterson 102

Class Time: Thursday, 5:00-7:50 pm

Email: Use website

AN EXPERIMENT: This course remains an experiment. Years ago, the Latin American history group taught large, lower-division surveys on campus but for the last decade we have given up. The reason was simple, our surveys did not generally fit any requirements but our own and so we drew many more students teaching upper-division courses. There was a down side, we didn't see students until they were juniors. In an attempt to reconnect, I am offering this course with the support and participation of my colleagues.

The course is organized in a format of watching a film and then having a discussion about it. There will also be sections on about six or seven weeks of the quarter. I will lecture briefly before the film and briefly after it but will structure my comments about basic issues in Latin American history and provide a brief background to issues raised in each film. On the issue of Latin American films, I must admit that I am not an expert and many you may know about films in Latin America or in general than I do – a great opportunity thus exists to get some of this knowledge in public. (See below.) In general, the films range over the entire span of Latin American history; many but not all of them are “historical,” that is, cinematic attempts to represent the past. All are works of “fiction,” built around narratives that relate to the past as an attempt to evoke events or cultures. Along the way we will have a chance to talk about Indians, blacks, and whites and every type of character from conquerors to intellectuals. We will also talk about movies and what happens when someone tries to tell about the past in this medium. Three of the books will be devoted to films in the region; one to history and one to reportage.

Many communications in the class will be through the website, so become enrolled and get online immediately. The website contains the email and discussion sites crucial to doing this course.

PAPERS: I will require two short papers (each 3-4 pages) and one long paper ((10 pages). Each paper should be accompanied by a bibliography and use an author, page citation style (King, Magical Reels, 10). Submit all papers in 12 pt. font (Times New Roman), double-spaced. The first paper will be assigned in week 3 and due week 4; the second will be assigned in week 7 and due week 8; and the final will be do at the time scheduled for a final exam. **Each short paper will count 15 per cent of the grade; the final paper will count 40 per cent. The class is large and so papers will have to be submitted in hard copy.**

PARTICIPATION: Worth 30 per cent of the grade. There are three component parts, which should total about 150 points for a top mark.

1. The first part will be to attend discussion sections and you will receive 10 points for each section that you attend; these amount to 50 points.
2. Class discussion. At the beginning of the class, you will be handed 3x5 cards; each card is worth 5 points. You may hand me back one card per class, including the first one. On each card put:
 - a. Name
 - b. Date
 - c. Five word description of comment
3. Film review. On the website, under Discussion posts. Write a four or five sentence and review of the film. It stinks, it's great, etc. and why you think so. If you were the instructor, would you show this film again? Seven points each. The review must be written the week after the film is shown; the cutoff time is the start of the next week's class.

BOOKS: All books are required and are on sale at Groundwork Books and on reserve in the library – with the exception of John Reed, which is on the website. Reading assignments will be given out in class each week.

1. King, John. Magical Reels (Verso, 2000) ISBN 185984233
2. Edwin Williamson, Penguin History of Latin America (Penguin) pb.
3. Richard Francaviglia and Jerry Rodnitzky, eds., Lights, Camera, History... (Texas A&M University Press)

MOVIE LIST:

1. The Magnificent Seven, Directed by John Sturges), (US -1960) April 2 – Read: King, Magical Reels, chapters 1-3; essays, Peter C. Rollens, “Introduction: Film and History,” and Richard Francaviglia, “Saracens and Crusaders,” in Lights, Camera, History
2. La otra conquista [The Other Conquest] Directed by Salvador Cassaco (Mexico 1999) April 9 – Read, Williamson, Penguin History of LA, Chapters 1-4; essay Nathan, Berg, Klemyk, “The Truth wrapped in a Package of Lies,” in Lights, Camera, History
3. Camila. Directed by Maria Luis Bemberg (Argentina 1984) April 16 -- Read King, Magical Reels, chapter 4; chapter 4; Williamson, Penguin History, chapters 6-8; essay Robert Rosenstone, “In Praise of the Biopic,” **FIRST PAPER IS ASSIGNED ON TUESDAY ON WEBSITE**
4. La ley de Herodes [Herod's Law] Directed by Luis Estrada (Mexico 1999) FVLVDV 1451-1. April 23 – Read Williamston, Penguin History, chaps. 9-10,; King, Magical Reels, chapter 5. **FIRST PAPER IS DUE ON THURSDAY IN CLASS**
5. Memorias del subdesarrollo [Memories of Underdevelopment] Directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea (Cuba 1965) April 30 – King, Magical Reels, chapter 7; Williamson, Penguin History, chapter 12.

6. Bye-Bye Brasil. Director Carlos Degues (Brazil 1979) FVLV 1252-1, May 7 – Read King, Magical Reels, chapter 5; Williamson, chapter 11
7. La historia oficial [The Official Story] Directed by Luis Puenzo (Argentina 1985) May 14 -- essay, Robert Brent Toplin,, “In Praise of Filmmakers,” in Lights, Camera, Action. SECOND PAPER IS ASSIGNED ON WEBSITE BY TUESDAY
8. The Battle of Chile, vol. 3 Directed by Patricio Guzman (Chile 1978) May 21—Read Williamson, Penguin History, Chapter 14 SECOND PAPER IS DUE ON THURSDAY IN CLASS
9. Machuca Directed by Andrés Wood (Chile 2004) FVLDV 4322-1 May 28 – Read King, Magical Reels, Chapter 8. FINAL PAPER IS ASSIGNED ON THURSDAY IN CLASS
10. Central do Brasil [Central Station] Directed by Walter Salles (Brazil 1998) -- June 4. Work on your final paper