MHIS101
Screening the Past: History on Film and Television
S2 Day 2014
Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor
Michelle Arrow
michelle.arrow@mq.edu.au
Contact via michelle.arrow@mq.edu.au
W6A 416
Tuesdays 2.30-3.30pm or other times by appointment

Lecturer
Leigh Boucher
leigh.boucher@mq.edu.au
Contact via leigh.boucher@mq.edu.au
W6A 405
by appointment

Credit points
3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
Recent surveys of popular historical awareness have demonstrated that most people find out about the past from film and television, yet visual histories are often criticised for the ways they present the past. This unit will consider the limitations and possibilities of history on screen. Films like Australia, Schindler’s List, Hairspray, and The Help have all provoked tremendous controversy. Do these filmic histories represent a more 'authentic' engagement with the past, or do they peddle false versions of history to a gullible public? This unit will introduce students to the critical study of history on film. Because this unit is concerned with how the past is represented in the present, it will provide a foundation for students to consider the study of history more broadly. The unit will also be of interest to students across the university.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates
Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources;
- begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
- identify arguments in secondary sources;
- communicate in written and verbal forms;
- construct an evidence-based interpretation of historical film and television;
- critically reflect on how historical representations are shaped by their contemporary contexts;
- plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;
- consider the ethical and professional obligations of historical practitioners in regards to intellectual honesty and acknowledgement;
- respectfully and constructively offer and respond to feedback from staff and other students.

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film Review Task</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Friday 5 September, 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Tutorial Quiz</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Mashup</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Tuesday 7 October 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Tuesday 11 November</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Film Review Task

Due: **Friday 5 September, 5pm**

Weighting: **20%**

**Word limit: 800-1000 words**

This task assesses your ability to complete a simple research task, your written communication skills, and your comprehension skills.

In order to complete this task you need to carefully read the prescribed tutorial readings for Weeks 1 and 3 for *Elizabeth*. You should also read the pieces by Leigh (on *Brokeback Mountain*) and Michelle (on *Evil Angels*), located at the end of your unit reader and on iLearn under 'Assessment'.
You must then locate two reviews/commentaries on *Elizabeth*: one from a British publication, the other from an Indian publication. The reviews need to have been written around the time of the film’s release - i.e., dated c.1998. Useful databases include Factiva (best because you can isolate your search by country/region), Film Literature Index, Film Index International, and the Film and Television Literature Index (you can find these databases in the library catalogue: click ‘Databases’ and then ‘media’ in the list of subject areas).

Once you have located your film reviews, please answer the following questions (200-250 words each):

1. After engaging with the prescribed material, how do you think historians should read reviews and public commentary written at the time of the film’s release?

2. What arguments do your reviewers/commentators make about Elizabeth?

3. What historical and historiographical information might you need to know about Queen Elizabeth I in order to understand *Elizabeth’s* interpretation of her life?

4. What sort of political and cultural concerns and issues from the time of *Elizabeth’s* release might be important in order to understand the contemporary response to the film?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources;
- begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
- identify arguments in secondary sources;
- communicate in written and verbal forms;
- critically reflect on how historical representations are shaped by their contemporary contexts;
- plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;
- consider the ethical and professional obligations of historical practitioners in regards to intellectual honesty and acknowledgement;

**Weekly Tutorial Quiz**

**Due:** weekly  
**Weighting:** 20%

Every week, you will be required to complete a short quiz: the quiz will test your comprehension of the weekly lecture and tutorial readings. The quiz will be marked weekly and you will receive either a mark of 0, 1 or 2 for your responses. Your final mark will be calculated using your best 10 quiz results. Further details of the quiz will be provided in tutorials.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- identify arguments in secondary sources;
• communicate in written and verbal forms;
• plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;
• respectfully and constructively offer and respond to feedback from staff and other students.

Film Mashup
Due: Tuesday 7 October 5pm
Weighting: 20%

Maximum length: 3 minutes + 800 words for critical reflection

This assessment task assesses your ability to construct an historical interpretation in the form of a simple multimedia presentation, your creativity and engagement, and to reflect critically on your work.

In this task you are required to produce a short presentation that combines images and audio in some form to make an argument about the past. This might be a slideshow (in Powerpoint, for example) of archival photographs with a soundtrack, or archival footage with new/different audio, an animation, a remix/mashup of existing historical films, a filmed re-enactment, or a mini-documentary...the possibilities are endless.

You will need to lodge this task on the MHIS101 iLearn site in a widely used file format (Quicktime, Powerpoint, Prezi, Windows media player). Week 7 tutorials will be dedicated to discussing approaches to this task and more information on the task will be provided via the iLearn site for this unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:
• begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
• communicate in written and verbal forms;
• plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;

Research essay
Due: Tuesday 11 November
Weighting: 40%

Word limit: 2000 words max

This assessment task assesses your capacity to construct an evidence-based interpretation of the past in written form. You must choose one of six set questions (which are available in the MHIS101 iLearn site under 'Assessment'): a short reading list is provided for each question but you need to also include at least TWO self-located written sources (indicate these in your bibliography). You must also submit a self-evaluation form with your essay (Available as a download on the MHIS101 iLearn site under 'Assessment').
On successful completion you will be able to:

- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources;
- begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
- identify arguments in secondary sources;
- communicate in written and verbal forms;
- construct an evidence-based interpretation of historical film and television;
- critically reflect on how historical representations are shaped by their contemporary contexts;
- plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;
- consider the ethical and professional obligations of historical practitioners in regards to intellectual honesty and acknowledgement;
- respectfully and constructively offer and respond to feedback from staff and other students.

**Delivery and Resources**

**Delivery:**

this unit is taught through a combination of lectures, tutorials and film screenings. You will be required to attend these each week. If you cannot attend the required film screening or lecture, you will need to catch up with the required film BEFORE you attend the relevant tutorial. You must also either attend or listen to the lecture before you attend the tutorial. If you cannot attend the on-campus film screening, you will need to either watch the film in the library or obtain your own copy outside the university.

**Resources:**

There is a unit reader for MHIS101, available for sale at the Co-Op Bookshop. Most of the required readings are available as downloads via the Library databases if you would rather not purchase the reader. You do not require any other textbooks but you will need to do go beyond the reader for your research essays.

The library holds most of the required films for this unit, as well as a large number of other films you will find useful or relevant. You can also access many films through your local video store.

**Unit Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Film/Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Assessment and Workload</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>What is an historical film?</td>
<td>please attend tutorials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Early Modern Europe</td>
<td><em>The Return of Martin Guerre</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Elizabeth</em></td>
<td></td>
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Learning and Teaching Activities

tutorial discussions
taking an active and informed role in weekly tutorial discussions and activities

lectures
attendance and active listening to lectures

referencing activity
practicing the correct referencing requirements in Modern History

reading for argument
in-class activities to practice the skills of critical reading for Modern History

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html


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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Film/Activity</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Australia at War</td>
<td>Gallipoli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paradise Road</td>
<td>Film review task due Friday 5 September 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mash-up - no film screening, no tutorials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MID-SEMESTER BREAK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>British Empire</td>
<td>A Passage to India</td>
<td>Mashup due Tuesday 7 October 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Amazing Grace</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1960s America</td>
<td>Mississippi Burning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>JFK</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mad Men</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Humour and the Holocaust</td>
<td>Research essay due Tuesday 11 November 5pm</td>
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Disruption to Studies Policy: http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

**Modern History Policy on late submission of assignments**

We expect you to be able to plan your deadlines in order to complete all your assessment tasks on time: juggling competing deadlines is the reality of university study. If your work is submitted after the due date, 2% of your grade will be deducted for every day that the assessment task is late. Work that is more than 2 weeks late may not be accepted (unless you have applied for special consideration) and it may be marked on a pass/fail basis.

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

**Learning Skills**

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

**Student Enquiry Service**

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

**Equity Support**

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

**IT Help**

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://informatics.mq.edu.au/
Graduate Capabilities

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Distinguish between primary and secondary sources;
• begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
• identify arguments in secondary sources;
• construct an evidence-based interpretation of historical film and television;
• consider the ethical and professional obligations of historical practitioners in regards to intellectual honesty and acknowledgement;

Assessment tasks

• Film Review Task
• Weekly Tutorial Quiz
• Film Mashup
• Research essay

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:
Learning outcomes

• Distinguish between primary and secondary sources;
• begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
• identify arguments in secondary sources;
• communicate in written and verbal forms;
• construct an evidence-based interpretation of historical film and television;

Assessment tasks

• Film Review Task
• Weekly Tutorial Quiz
• Film Mashup
• Research essay

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Distinguish between primary and secondary sources;
• begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
• identify arguments in secondary sources;
• construct an evidence-based interpretation of historical film and television;
• plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;

Assessment tasks

• Film Mashup
• Research essay

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.
This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcome**

- begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;

**Assessment tasks**

- Film Mashup
- Research essay

**Effective Communication**

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- communicate in written and verbal forms;
- construct an evidence-based interpretation of historical film and television;
- respectfully and constructively offer and respond to feedback from staff and other students.

**Assessment tasks**

- Film Review Task
- Weekly Tutorial Quiz
- Film Mashup
- Research essay

**Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as
primary sources;
• critically reflect on how historical representations are shaped by their contemporary contexts;
• consider the ethical and professional obligations of historical practitioners in regards to intellectual honesty and acknowledgement;

**Assessment task**
• Film Mashup

**Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**
We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**
• begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
• critically reflect on how historical representations are shaped by their contemporary contexts;

**Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative**
We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**
• Distinguish between primary and secondary sources;
• begin to develop a critical vocabulary for the analysis of film and televisual materials as primary sources;
• identify arguments in secondary sources;
• communicate in written and verbal forms;
• construct an evidence-based interpretation of historical film and television;
• plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;
• respectfully and constructively offer and respond to feedback from staff and other
Assessment tasks

• Film Review Task
• Weekly Tutorial Quiz
• Film Mashup
• Research essay

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• critically reflect on how historical representations are shaped by their contemporary contexts;
• plan, revise and submit written work according to a schedule;