

HILD 14: FILM AND HISTORY IN LATIN AMERICA

Wednesday, 17:00-19:50, PCYNH 122

Professor Benjamin Cowan (bacowan@ucsd.edu)

Office Hours: Wednesday, 13:00-15:00

This class closely examines a series of films made in or about Latin America, in order to better understand the history of the region and the way that history has been imagined and interpreted. Students will watch films in class, respond to lecture material about the histories in question, and discuss readings in their section meetings each week. The class will prepare students to understand and respond to different types of sources, to write cogently about historical topics, and to research primary and secondary sources. Students will also gain an introductory understanding of certain basic themes and events within Latin America's general history.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

1. Readings and Discussion (45%): Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students must come to each class having read the assigned material corresponding to that particular date and must be prepared to participate actively in discussion sections. Learning to read and respond to such material in a timely fashion is one of the objectives of this course; students who find it difficult to complete readings on time should feel free to visit me or their section instructor during office hours for additional assistance. All hard-copy readings will be available in the bookstore and on reserve at the library; electronic readings will be available by library e-reserve (denoted by "Reserves") or via access to online publications. We will watch the primary films in class; optional films are available on reserve.
 - Books Available for Purchase:
 - *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies* (Reprint)
 - Jorge Amado, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon*
 - John Charles Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America*
2. Midterm (15%): A short midterm will cover material from the first half of the course.
3. Presentation and Response (15%): Students will sign up to watch and respond to two films from those listed as "optional." For one film, they will write a two-page response, to be submitted in section during the week corresponding to the film chosen. This two-page response should compare and/or contrast the film with a primary source about the topic in question; students themselves should locate such primary sources via research. For the other optional film, students will (in groups or pairs) present the film to their discussion sections, relating it to the principal film for that week and discussing its relevance to that week's lecture and readings.
4. Final Papers (25%): Each student will submit a seven- to ten-page paper on a third film from the "optional" list. Students will watch their selected films, and then research the historical period in question. The paper should address commonalities and differences in the film's version of events or conditions and those found in research. Students' research should include at least five secondary sources (academic sources such as monographs, journal articles, and edited volumes or book chapters) and one primary source. Use these sources to construct an argument about how the film's interpretation of the historical period, person, series of events, etc. relates to the historical interpretations presented in

the secondary sources and the raw material found in the primary source. Students should not use any electronic sources which are not peer-reviewed articles or books—academic sources generally available via the library website. This assignment will require students to use physical resources (books and journal articles and chapters) available at the library—students will, in other words, have to physically visit the library to successfully complete the assignment. Nonacademic websites (including Wikipedia) will not be considered appropriate sources and may result in a student’s paper being disqualified.

Students should keep in mind that their papers will not be accepted should they fail to conform to the following standards: word-processed; double-spaced; in 12-point, Times New Roman or Cambria font with standard (1-inch) margins; and proofread until free of spelling and grammar errors. Citations should be in Chicago (footnote) format. Except in the case of a verifiable emergency or with an extension granted by your section instructor in advance, late papers will be penalized one full letter grade (A to B) for each day they are late. If you fear that your work will be late for any reason, please contact your instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. Plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Any material, idea (transcribed or paraphrased), or turn of phrase that has come from someone else’s work must be properly documented. Ignorance of the exact definitions of plagiarism will not be considered an excuse. Should you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, do not fail to consult the university’s resources on academic ethics, available—among other places—at:

- <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/>
- https://treebeard.ucsd.edu/files/pdf/PlagiarismBrochure_May2014.pdf.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS (Subject to Change)

WEEK 1—4 APRIL: INDIGENOUS PASTS AND PRESENTS

- Film: *Apocalypto*
- NO LECTURE THIS WEEK; NO SECTION MEETINGS THIS WEEK.
 - Watch the movie online (on reserve via the UCSD library), and please use the extra time to read the below. For next week’s section (April 12), you should have read the materials for weeks 1 and 2.
 - We will watch *La Otra Conquista* in class on April 11.
- Read:
 - Traci Ardren, “Is Apocalypto Pornography?” *Archaeology*, December 5, 2006, <http://www.archaeology.org/online/reviews/apocalypto.html>
 - Andrea Stone, “Orcs in Loincloths,” *Archaeology*, January 3, 2007, <http://www.archaeology.org/online/reviews/apocalypto2.html>
 - Andrea Cucina and Vera Tiesler, “New Perspectives on Human Sacrifice and Postsacrificial Body Treatments in Ancient Maya Society: An Introduction,” in *New Perspectives on Human Sacrifice and Ritual Body Treatments in Ancient Maya Society*, ed. Vera Tiesler and Andrea Cucina (New York: Springer, 2007): 1-5. (E-book available via UCSD library.)
- Optional Films:
 - *Como Era Gostoso o Meu Francês*
 - *Brava Gente Brasileira*
 - *Yndio do Brasil*

WEEK 2—11 APRIL: COLONIZATION

- In-class film: *La Otra Conquista*
- Read:
 - Thomas Holloway, “Whose Conquest is this, Anyway? *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*,” in *Based on a True Story*, 29-46
 - Miriam Haddu, *Contemporary Mexican Cinema, 1989-1999* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 62-79 (Reserves)
- Optional Films:
 - *Aguirre, Wrath of God*

WEEK 3—18 APRIL: PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF DIFFERENCE

- In-class film: *Como Era Gostoso o Meu Francês (How Tasty was my Little Frenchman)*
- Read:
 - Theodore Robert Young, “You Are What You Eat: Tropicalismo and *How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman*,” in *A twice-told tale: reinventing the encounter in Iberian/Iberian American literature and film*, ed. Santiago Juan-Navarro and Theodore Robert Young, 80-90 (Reserves).
 - Hal Langfur, “Introduction: Recovering Brazil’s Indigenous Pasts,” in *Native Brazil : Beyond the Convert and the Cannibal, 1500-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2014), 1-29. (E-book available via UCSD library.)
 - Grada Kilomba, “The Mask: Colonialism, Memory, Trauma, and Decolonization,” in *Plantation Memories: Episodes of Everyday Racism* (Munich: Unrast, 2010), 15-23 (Reserves).
 - [OPTIONAL] Richard Peña, “*How Tasty was my Little Frenchman*,” in *Brazilian Cinema*, ed. Randal Johnson and Robert Stam, 191-200 (Reserves).

WEEK 4—25 APRIL: WOMEN AND THE NATION

- In-class film: *Camila*
- Read:
 - Donald Stevens, ““Passion and Patriarchy in Nineteenth-Century Argentina: Maria Luisa Bemberg’s *Camila*,” in *Based on a True Story*.
- Optional Films:
 - *Hora da Estrela*
 - *Yo, la peor de todas*
 - *Lucia*

WEEK 5—2 MAY: SEXUALITY

- In-class film: *Madame Satã*
- Read:
 - James N. Green, *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1999), Chapter Two (pp. 62-107) (Reserves)
 - Sandra Cisneros, “Chavela Vargas: Una Mujer Muy Mujer” in *A House of My Own* (New York: Knopf, 2015)

- Sofía Ruiz-Alfaro, “From Chavela to Frida: Loving from the Margins,” *Journal of Homosexuality* (2012), 59:8, 1131-1144
- Optional Films:
 - *Antes que Anochezca*
 - *Dona Flor e seus dois maridos*
 - *Plata Quemada*
 - *Pixote*
 - *The Way He Looks*

WEEK 6—9 MAY: SLAVERY

- **MIDTERM IN SECTION THIS WEEK**
- In-class film: *La Última Cena*
- Read:
 - John Marz, “Recasting Cuban Slavery,” in *Based on a True Story*, 103-122
 - Esteban Montejo, “A Cuban Slave’s Testimony,” in *Problems in Modern Latin American History*, edited by James A. Wood, 4th Edition (Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 30-35 (Reserves)
 - Stanley J. Stein, “A Day on a Coffee Plantation,” in *Problems in Modern Latin American History*, edited by James A. Wood, 4th Edition (Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), 35-38 (Reserves)
- Optional Films:
 - *Quilombo*
 - *El Otro Francisco*

WEEK 7—16 MAY: FANTASIES

- In-class film: *Gabriela*
- Read:
 - Eliana Guerreiro Ramos Bennett, “Gabriela Cravo E Canela: Jorge Amado and the Myth of the Sexual Mulata in Brazilian Culture,” in *The African Diaspora : African Origins and New World Identities*, edited by Isidore Okpewho, Carole Boyce Davies, and Ali Al’Amin Mazrui (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 227–33.
 - Jorge Amado, *Gabriela*
 - Erica Williams, Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Entanglements, (pp. 1-12, 44-63) (E-book available via UCSD library.)
 - Natasha Pravaz, “Performing Mulata-ness: The Politics of Cultural Authenticity and Sexuality among Carioca Samba Dancers,” *Latin American Perspectives* 39 (2012): 113-133.
- Optional Films:
 - *Iracema*
 - *Doña Bárbara*

WEEK 8—23 MAY: MEN

- In-class film: *El lugar sin limites*
- Read:

- Benjamin A. Cowan, “How Machismo Got Its Spurs—in English: Social Science, Cold War Imperialism, and the Ethnicization of Hypermasculinity,” *Latin American Research Review* 52, no. 4 (2017): 606–622
- Matthew C. Gutmann, *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996) (pp. 1-27)
- Optional Films:
 - *Retrato de Teresa*
 - *Dos tipos de cuidado*
 - *Y tu mamá, también*
 - *Madame Satã*

WEEK 9—30 MAY: DICTATORSHIP

- In-class film: *Machuca*
- Read:
 - Peter Kornbluh, *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability* (New York: The New Press, 2003), 1-34; 80-115 (Reserves).
 - Luis Martin-Cabrera and Daniel Naomi Voionmaa, “Class Conflict, State of Exception and Radical Justice in *Machuca* by Andrés Wood,” *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 16, no. 1 (2007): 63-80.
- Optional Films:
 - *Four Days in September*
 - *Funny, Dirty, Little War*
 - *La História Oficial*

WEEK 10—6 JUNE: VIOLENCE

- In-class film: *Cidade de Deus*
- Read:
 - Erica Robb Larkins, *The Spectacular Favela: Violence in Modern Brazil* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2015), 80-108. (E-book available via UCSD library.)
 - Sophia A. McClennen, “From the Aesthetics of Hunger to the Cosmetics of Hunger in Brazilian Cinema: Meirelles’ City of God,” *symploke* 19, nos. 1-2 (2011), 95-106.
- Optional Films:
 - *Tropa da Elite*
 - *Carandiru*
- **FINAL PAPERS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF SECTION MEETING, JUNE 7**