

syllabus

history 383 | fall 2017

Prof. Chad Black

Email: cblack6-at-utk.edu

Phone: 974-9871

Office: 2627 Dunford Hall, 6th Floor

Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:00-4:00, Wednesday, 3:00-4:00

syllabus

As in the rest of the world, moving pictures have long marveled Latin America. In what was most certainly the first demonstration of “moving pictures” south of the Rio Bravo, the Lumière brothers showed then Mexican President Porfirio Diaz their early films in Chapultepec Castle in 1896. As moving picture technology spread through out the world, including Latin America, it radically altered how individuals and groups in the region perceived of themselves, and were represented by others. Film (and later television) has been a source of enjoyment, a powerful propaganda tool, a medium of artistic expression, and driving force of national identity.

In this class we will focus on films that portray the history of early Spanish America as complex indigenous societies were flourished, were conquered by Iberian empires, and developed into new colonial societies of Europeans, and creole, afro-descendent, and indigenous peoples. How has the popular cinema industry portrayed the colonial period in Latin American history? We will watch and analyze films from the United States and Latin America that grapples with various aspects of Latin American society before, during, and after the Iberian conquests of the Americas. Through these films, we will both critically analyze their historical content, as well as the assumptions and ideological perspectives that go into the making of films on this period of Latin American history.

Most films will be in Spanish with English subtitles. The majority of the films are rated R for strong language, violence, and/or sexual content. These topics (sex and violence) are not the main topic of the films, but are used to convey the struggles and reality of much of the colonial period, but also of contemporary struggle in the twentieth century in, for example, the Central American revolutions. In class we will discuss at length the themes that go beyond the uninformed viewer's interpretation of the film. If, however, you feel uncomfortable with these topics please come speak to me.

required readings

There is one required purchase for this class:

- Matthew Restall and Kris Lane, *Latin America in Colonial Times*, Cambridge University Press, 2011.

There will be many more assigned chapter, article, and primary source readings. They will be available via the university library website, or in a dropbox folder that I will share with enrolled members of the course.

films for viewing

We will watch seven feature-length films this semester, as well as other selections or shorts:

1. *The Five Suns: A Sacred History of Mexico* Patricia Amlin, 1996. 59min.
2. *Popul Vuh: The Creation of Myth of the Maya*, Patricia Amlin, 1989. 60min.
3. *Apocalypto*, Mel Gibson, 2006. 139min.
4. *1492: Conquest of Paradise*, Ridley Scott, 1992. 154min.
5. *La otra conquista*, Salvador Carasco, 1998. 110min.
6. *Yo, la peor de todos*, Maria Luisa Bemberg, 1990. 105min.
7. *La ultima cena*, Tomás Gutierrez, 1976. 120min.
8. *The Mission*, Roland Joffé, 1986. 126min.
9. *También la lluvia*, Icíar Bollaín, 2010. 104min.

policies



Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner with appropriate documentation.

Attendance: Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory. We only meet once a week. If you miss one class, you've missed an entire week of class. Viewing and discussion of films, group editing work, etc. that is done in class is indispensable to success in this class. If you will not be able to attend class, please contact me ahead of time.

Deadlines: Assignments must be emailed to the instructor no later than the beginning of class on the day they are due, or at some other specified time established by the professor. It is important to be technologically savvy in today's world. Much of our communication occurs through email, including the sharing of documents and other work product. Late papers will not be accepted for any reason without prior arrangement. This includes technology problems. You're responsible for attaching your work correctly and sending it in on time.

Cell Phones and Laptops: Please silence our cell phones prior to class. Please do not text during class. Laptops are allowed only for tasks that require them. In other words, plan to have paper with you. Based on the prevailing literature, hand note-taking—both while reading and in class—leads to substantially better educational outcomes. You are not required to have a laptop in class, so feel free to leave it at home. During film viewing, no laptops or glowing screens can be open. If, however, you have compelling reasons to use your laptop for notetaking, particularly during films, consider sitting at the back in order to prevent your screen's glow from distracting others.

Office Hours: Students are strongly encouraged to speak with me outside of class. The advantages of talking with me include: extra help on an assignment or preparation for an exam; clarification of materials covered in lecture, discussion of my comments on your work; discussion of this or related courses. I am available during office hours on a first-come, first-served basis; if you cannot come by during office hours, please contact me via email or phone and I will be happy to set up an appointment with you.

Changes: I reserve the right to change this syllabus as the semester progresses. This is not a contract, but rather a document to guide expectations and clearly communicate weekly assignments. Please bring the syllabus with you to our class meetings. Or, keep up with it on the course website.

Assignments

1. **Film introductions and discussions (30%):** Students will be assigned small groups charged with introducing and discussing one film over the course of the semester. This assignment involves researching the reviews of the film and director, other works by that director, and the historical context of the film. It also involves engaging students actively in a discussion of the film. Discussions of the film will occur the week after viewing. The introduction will be the day of the viewing, and should show evidence

of serious scholarly research, including a bibliography of works referenced in your research. Consider these questions in preparing your presentation:

- Who is the director? What else has this person made and how does this film fit into that genre?
- What evidence is there of historical research that the filmmaker conducted in the process of producing the film?
- What is the potential and limitations of the medium of film for interpreting history as portrayed through this specific film?
- What are the cinematographic virtues of the film?
- How have other reviewers critiqued this film?

To assist in the class discussion of the film, bring to class:

- A handout for the class that may include items such as a list of discussion questions, a study guide, related web sites, and/or class exercises for discussing the film.
- An annotated bibliography of sources related to this film and its historical context (either included in the class handout or given directly to the instructor).
- Assigned readings related to that film.
- Anything else that will help in the interpretation and understanding of the film.

The best discussions will explicitly link our assigned readings to the film, and engage both critically.

2. **Readings Précis (25%):**

For each assigned reading aside from the text book, students must write a research précis to be turned in on the day that reading is assigned. Instructions for how to write a research précis are available [here](#).

3. **Reaction Papers (25%):**

For each of the feature-length films, students will write a 3-5 page reaction paper, detailing their historical analysis of the film. The reaction paper should use the course readings to evaluate the historical content of the film, and may also include the student's aesthetic critique of the film.

4. **Final Paper (20%):**

Students will have a final take-home exam due at the end of the final exam period as normally scheduled for this class.

Schedule

Week 1: Introduction (August 29)

Read:

- This Syllabus!!

In-class viewings:

- Selections from the Lumiere brothers, bell hooks, and D.W. Griffith.
-

Week 2: Precolombia I (September 5)

Read:

1. Transcript of bell hooks, "Cultural Criticism & Transformation"
2. Donald F. Stevens, Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies, Intro and Chapter 1.
3. Tom Gunning, "Making Sense of Film."
4. Charles Mann, "1491." *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 2002.
5. J. Eric Thompson, "The Meaning of Maize for the Maya"

At-home viewing:

- The Five Suns. If that link doesn't work, or you're off campus and need to sign in, here is the record in the UT library catalog.

In-class viewing:

- The Popul Vuh

Writing due:

- Précis for Stevens, hooks, and Mann.
-

Week 3: *Apocalypto* (September 12)

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapters 1-3.
2. David Freidel, "Betraying the Maya," *Archaeology* 60, no. 2 (March/April 2007): 36-41.
3. Traci Ardren, "Is Apocalypto Pornography?" *Archaeology*, December 5, 2006

4. Andrea Stone, "Orcs in Loincloths," *Archaeology*, January 3, 2007

In-class viewing:

- *Apocalypto*

Writing:

- Précis for Freidel article.
-

Week 4: Caribbean Phase (September 19)

Discussion of *Apocalypto*

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapters 4-5.
2. Sonya Lipsett-Rivera and Sergio Rivera Ayala, "Columbus Takes On the Forces of Darkness, or Film and Historical Myth in 1492: The Conquest of Paradise," *Based on a True Story*, Chapter 2.
3. Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*, "A Handful of Adventurers: The Myth of Exceptional Men," pp. 1-27.

Writing:

- Précis of Lipsett-Rivera and of Restall.
-

Week 5: 1492 (September 26)

Read:

1. The Requerimiento.
2. Leo J. Garofalo, "Christopher Columbus Evaluates Indigenous Societies," pp. 6-16 in *Documenting Latin America: Gender, Race, Empire Volume 1*.
3. Leo J. Garofalo, "European Priests Discuss Ruling Indigenous and African Peoples," pp. 57-68.

Writing:

- Précis of Garofalo primary sources.
 - Reaction paper to *Apocalypto*
-

Week 6: Conquest I (October 3)

Discussion of 1492

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapters 6-7.
2. Indian Conquistadors, Intro and Ch. 1.
3. Camila Townsend, "Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico," *AHR* 108.3 (2003): 659-687.

Writing:

- Précis of *Indian Conquistadors* and Townsend.
-

Week 7: *La otra conquista* (October 10)

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapter 8.
2. Mesoamerican Voices, Ch. 3.
3. 2.J. Michael Francis. "In the Service of God, I Order these Temples of Idolatrous Worship Razed to the Ground": Extirpation of Idolatry and the Search for the Santuario Grande of Iguaque (Columbia, 1595)" in *Colonial Lives*, pp. 39-53.
4. "Orders given to the Twelve (1523)" in Mills, Taylor, and Graham *Colonial Latin America: A Documentary History*, (SR Books, 2004): 59-64.

Writing:

- Précis of *Mesoamerican Voices*.
 - Reaction paper to 1492.
-

Week 8: Colonial Society I - Gender (October 17)

Discussion of *La otra conquista*

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapters 10-12.
2. Few, Martha. "Women, Religion, and Power: Gender and Resistance in Daily Life in Late-Seventeenth-Century Santiago de Guatemala." *Ethnohistory* 42:4 (Autumn 1995), 627-637).
3. Rosalva Loreto Lopez (trans. Sonya Lipsett-Rivera), "The Devil, Women, and the Body in Seventeenth-Century Puebla Convents," *The Americas* 59.2 (October 2002): 181-199.

Writing:

- Précis of Few and Lopez.
-

Week 9: *I, Worst of All* (October 24)

Read:

1. Susan E. Ramirez, "I, the Worst of All: The Literary Life of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz"
2. Leo J. Garofalo, "Ambitious Women in a 'Man's World'" pp. 140-149.
3. Read the six Sor Juana sonnets here.
4. Kathryn Burns, "Gender and the Politics of Mestizaje: The Convent of Santa Clara," *HAHR* 78.1 (Feb 1998): 5-44.

Writing:

- Reaction paper, *La otra conquista*.
 - Précis for Burns.
-

Week 10: Colonial Society I – Slavery (October 31)

Discussion of *I, Worst of All*

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapter 9.
2. William Van Norman, "Café con azúcar: The Expansion of the Slave Population and Plantations," in *Shade-Grown Slavery* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2013).
3. Sherwin Bryant, "Finding Gold, Forming Slaver: The Creation of a Classic Slave Society, Popayan, 1600-1700" *The Americas* 63.1 (July 2006), pp. 81-112.
4. Manuel Barcia, "Homicides, Conspiracies, and Revolts," in *Seeds of Insurrection* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press)

Writing:

- Précis for Van Norman, Barcia, and Bryant.
-

Week 11: *La última cena* (November 7)

Read:

1. The documents from Gloria García Rodríguez, Ada Ferrer, and Nancy Weststrate, eds. *Voices of the Enslaved in Nineteenth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2011):
 - Chapter 5. The Plantation Social Network
 - Chapter 6. The Labor Relations of Coartado Slaves
 - Chapter 7. The Master's Violent Hand.
2. William Van Norman, "When Everyday Actions Escalate: Resistance, Rebellions, and Cultural Complexity," in *Shade-Grown Slavery*.

Writing:

- Reaction paper, *I, Worst of All*.
 - Précis on Van Norman.
-

Week 12: Bourbon Reforms (November 14)

Discussion of *La última cena*

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapters 13-14.
2. Chad Black, *Limits of Gender Domination*, Chapters 1 and 2. (<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/2113>)
3. Mary-Elizabeth Reeve, "Regional Interaction in Western Amazon: The Early Colonial Encounter and the Jesuit Years: 1538-1767," *Ethnohistory* 41.1 (Winter 1993): 106-138.

Writing:

- Précis on Black and Reeve.
-

Week 13: *The Mission* (November 21)

Read:

1. James Schofield Saeger, "The Mission and Historical Missions: Film and the Writing of History", *The Americas* Vol. 51 No. 3 (1995): pp. 393-415. (On JSTOR)
2. "José de Gálvez's Decrees for the King's Subjects in Mexico (1769, 1778).
3. Olga Merino and Linda Newson, "Jesuit Missions in Spanish America: The Aftermath of the Expulsion," *Yearbook* 21 (1995), 133-148.
4. Leo Garofalo, "High Clergy Warns the Crown of Popular Discontent", pp. 207-214.

Writing:

- Reaction paper, *La última cena*.
 - Précis Merino and Newson, and Saeger.
-

Week 14: Colonial Legacies (November 28)

Discussion of *The Mission*

Read:

1. Restall and Lane, Chapter 15.
2. Michael Gobat, "The Invention of Latin America," *AHR* (Dec 2013): 1345-1375.

Writing:

- Précis of Gobat.
-

Week 15: *Tambien La Lluvia* (December 5)

Read:

None!

Writing:

- Reaction paper, *The Mission*.
-

Final paper, due.