

Laura Finley
Sentinel High School
901 South Ave. Missoula, MT
lfinley@mcpsmt.org

History Through Film

Semester 1: Cold War Chaos

Course Description

Through this course, you will gain an understanding of the events that shaped the Cold War Era around the world, as well as involve yourselves in the critical analysis of films for their cultural bias and interpretation of historical events. You will be given the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities to develop your knowledge and awareness of history as well as display growing media literacy.

We are the first generation to construct our reality based on electronic images. This being the case, movies have become the “fast and easy” way to educate ourselves about the past. This class will delve into critical thought about the successes and shortcomings of using film as a historical source of information. You will ultimately work to separate facts from bias, find erroneous information, and recognize exaggeration.

Course Goals

- Give students practical experience in critical analysis by evaluating films as historical evidence.
- To motivate students to interrogate history by exposing them to relevant material regarding past events.
- To use film as a means of motivating students to study selected topics in history.
- To improve our listening, discussion, and critical analysis skills.
- To develop an in-depth knowledge of major topics in history.

Expectations

This is a fun class! We will watch some great films, have interesting conversations, and work together frequently. That said, it is not a time to goof around with your buddies, it is not nap time, and it is not a study hall. In order to keep this class fun and functional I ask you to think critically about these expectations:

- Be here everyday. If you are excused absent, you will need to make up the film and/or work on your own.
- Be on time. It demonstrates your respect (or lack thereof) for me and your classmates. Remember, we are watching films, and are on a timetable! NO, I will not restart the film for you!
- Phones: See school policy.
- Be engaged. Yes, movies are cool, yes the room will be dark, yes you may be tired. If you are unable to stay engaged, we can find a different class that is a better fit for you.

- Snacks. Bring them! We'll talk about this further in class... But I need snacks, you need snacks, movies need snacks. If we're responsible, we're good.

Major Assignments

This class will include opportunities for critical analysis through discussion, lecture, activities, presentations, group work, and individual work. Students are expected to be engaged in all activities throughout the semester.

Class Assignments/Citizenship 50%

Each week and topic will include class discussion and activities. If you are in class and engaged, your expectations will be clear, and you will be successful.

Topic Presentation 20%

At the beginning of the semester, you will be put into a group, and your group will choose one topic for the semester. You and your group will be responsible for a project having to do with this topic. More information will come about what this entails. This will be your ONLY out-of-class time responsibility. Do it well!

Assessments 30%

Throughout the semester, and at the midway and end points, we will have assessments through which you will gauge your understanding of the content topics, critical film analysis, and progress in meeting course goals. You will have ample opportunity to be successful. Do it well!

Late Policy/Absence Expectations

Late work will be accepted at 50% until the end of each quarter. After the quarter ends, no late work for that quarter will be accepted. AT ALL.

Unexcused Absence: You are responsible for getting work that you miss. If it is late, it will be taken late at 50% until quarter ends.*

Excused Absence: You are responsible for getting work that you miss. You will have TWO days from your return to retrieve and hand in work for on-time credit. Beyond two days, work will be taken late at 50% until quarter ends. *

IF YOU KNOW YOU WILL BE GONE, talk to me in advance! I'm happy to talk you through what you're missing, answer questions, etc (within reason). The more time you give yourself, the more likely you are to be successful!

Semester Overview

This is a tentative schedule. I reserve the right to edit this syllabus

Dates	Topics/Films	Project Group
September 6 - 16 The Cold War/Atomic Bomb	The Cold War <i>The Day After</i> (NR)	
	The Atomic Bomb <i>Dr. Strangelove</i> (PG)	
September 19-30 American Politics	Cuban Missile Crisis <i>Thirteen Days</i> (PG13)	

	Kennedy Assassination <i>The Kennedy Assassination: Beyond Conspiracy</i> (NR)	
October 3-14 Decolonization (S.I. Possible)	Decolonization <i>Invictus</i> (PG13)	
	Genocide <i>God Grew Tired of Us</i> (NR)	
October 24-November 4 Science/Technology (S.I. included)	Space Race <i>Hidden Figures</i> (PG)	
	HIV/AIDS <i>And the Band Played On</i> (PG)	
November 7-18 Popular Culture (S.I. Possible)	White Flight/Suburbia <i>The Outsiders</i> (PG)	
	Red Scare/Spies <i>Bridge of Spies</i> (PG13)	
November 28- December 9 Counter Culture (S.I. Possible)	Hippies <i>Woodstock</i> (R)	
	Rock n' Roll <i>American masters: Jimi Hendrix: Hear My Train a Comin' [S27E5]</i> (NR)	
December 12- January 6 Hot War	Vietnam War <i>Good Morning, Vietnam</i> (R)	
	Soviet/Afghan War <i>The Beast (of War)</i> (R)	
January 9-20 Semester Wrap up (S.I. Included)	Wrap up <i>Across the Universe</i> (PG13)	

Other potential films:

The Deer Hunter

Forrest Gump

The Hunt for Red October

October Sky

Bohemian Rhapsody

*M*A*S*H*

Argo

Apollo 13

Miracle

Manchurian Candidate

Iron Giant

Rebel Without a Cause

Apocalypse Now

Various music videos

Red Dawn

From Russia with Love

Detroit Rock City

Blood Diamond

Pleasantville

American Graffiti

Red Army

Sensitive Topics

This class will introduce images, readings, and projects that will include subjects that may be sensitive to some students. The goal of this class is to expose students to viewpoints and images that require critical thinking in analyzing their legitimacy, bias, use, and dependency. The inclusion of these images/ideas are not intended to be an endorsement of the ideas, rather an opportunity for discussion and analysis.

Plagiarism

The Sentinel High School student handbook defines cheating as, “An effort to improve grades by copying notes, papers, looking at another’s paper or test, plagiarism, etc.” In this context plagiarism includes representing someone else’s work as your own through methods including, but not limited to, copying a classmate’s work, copying from an online source/author, quoting a source without citing a reference, and inserting a couple of your own words into another author’s statement without citing the source. Plagiarism/cheating in this class will result in a zero on the assignment, with the possibility of parent contact, ISS/OSS, a replacement assignment, etc., as stated in the “consequences” section of the student handbook.

Please Return to Ms. Finley:

Student Name: _____ Class period: _____
 Parent/Guardian Name: _____
 Relationship to student: _____
 Parent/Guardian Email: _____ Phone: _____
 Preferred method of contact (Check one): Phone _____ Email _____

By signing below, I declare that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the History Through Film guidelines for the 2022-2023 school year, including the following:

Expectation/Rule	Student Initials	Adult Initials
Electronic devices will be stored in provided storage caddy and will not be used without teacher approval/request.		
Assignments that are late receive 50% credit until the end of the quarter (see student handbook for exceptions).		
Students may watch PG13, R, or NR films provided they are adequately relevant to topic material (see list above).		
Students will be responsible for one major project, which WILL require out-of-class time work.		

Adult Signature _____

Student Signature _____