

Laura Finley  
Sentinel High School  
901 South Ave. Missoula, MT  
[lfinley@mcpsmt.org](mailto:lfinley@mcpsmt.org)

## **History Through Film**

### **Cold War Chaos**

#### **Course Description**

Through this course, you will gain an understanding of the cultural 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. DVDs will be loaned to the library after we finish the film for your review if needed
- 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.

### Late Policy/Absence Expectations

Late work will be accepted at 75% within the week of the due date, and then 50% until the end of each quarter. After the quarter ends, no late work for that quarter will be accepted. AT ALL. \*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
February 3-7 <b>The Cold War/Atomic Bomb</b>	The Cold War/Atomic Bomb <i>The Day After</i> (NR)
February 10 - 21 <b>Spies/Espionage</b>	Spycraft <i>Bridge of Spies</i> (PG13)
	Defection <i>Hunt for Red October</i> (PG)
February 24 - March 7 <b>Political Economics</b> (S.I. Possible)	Soviet Bloc Communism <i>Chernobyl</i> (TV MA)
	Baby Boom <i>Pleasantville</i> (PG13)
March 24 - April 4 <b>Sport</b>	American Perspective <i>Miracle</i> (PG)/ <i>Inside North Korea: Live from the Games</i> (TV PG)
	Soviet Perspective <i>Red Army</i> (PG)
April 7 - 18 <b>Scientific Development</b> (S.I. Possible)	Space Race <i>Hidden Figures</i> (PG)
	Human Experimentation <i>The Manchurian Candidate</i> (R)
April 21 - May 2 <b>Proxy War</b>	Vietnam War <i>Good Morning, Vietnam</i> (R)/ <i>Platoon</i> (R)
	Soviet/Afghan War <i>Rambo III</i> (R)/ <i>The Beast</i> (R)
May 5 - 16	Disability Activism

<b>Civil Rights Movements</b> (S.I. Included)	<i>Crip Camp</i> (R)
	LGBTQ Rights <i>And the Band Played On</i> (PG)
May 19 - 30 <b>Counter Culture</b> (S.I. Possible)	Rock n' Roll <i>Rumble: The Indians who Rocked the World</i>
	Hippies <i>Across the Universe</i> (PG 13)
POSSIBLE: June 2 - 12 <b>Political Upheaval</b>	Kennedy <i>The Kennedy Assn.: Beyond Conspiracy</i> (NR)
	Nixon <i>All the President's Men</i> (PG)/ <i>Argo</i> (R)

Other potential films:

*The Deer Hunter*

*Apollo 13*

*Red Dawn*

*Forrest Gump*

*Argo*

*From Russia with Love*

*Manchurian Candidate*

*Detroit Rock City*

*October Sky*

*Iron Giant*

*Blood Diamond*

*God sleeps in Rwanda*

*Bohemian Rhapsody*

*Rebel Without a Cause*

*American Graffiti*

*M\*A\*S\*H*

*Apocalypse Now*

*Various music videos*

*Invictus*

*God Grew Tired of Us*

*Dr. Strangelove*

*Thirteen Days*

*Woodstock*

*Full Metal Jacket*

*Chernobyl*

### 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 2024-2025 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 75% then 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).		

Adult Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_