

HIST 190.2
SPECIAL TOPIC: HISTORY & FILM IN LATIN AMERICA
Instructor: Dr. Sandra Aguilar
Office: Comenius Hall 302
Office Hours: by appointment



Course description:

This course aims to familiarize students with some of the best cinematography of Latin America addressing social and historical questions. We use films as a window to delve into the region's history, and as a motivation to learn more about it. Our main objective will be to achieve a greater understanding of the history of Latin America, and to analyze the relationship between history and historical representation. Open to all students without prerequisite.

Required texts:

Stevens, Donald F. ed., *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1997). On reserve at the library

Films available on Blackboard:

The Mission, directed by Roland Joffé, UK, 1986.

I, the Worst of All, directed by María Luisa Bemberg, Argentina, 1990.

Like Water for Chocolate, directed by Alfonso Arau, Mexico, 1992.

The Motorcycle Diaries, directed by Walter Salles, Argentina, Chile, Perú, Francia, 2004.

Grading:

10% Journal

Write a two-page journal summarizing the main arguments and provide your own evaluation of how films can improve or hinder our understanding of the past.

80% Four Papers 20% each

You will write five double-spaced pages analyzing films in regards to how they portray the past. In order to do so, students will discuss how historians see and understand those films (based on the assigned reading). You should also elaborate on what aspects of the film you found more interesting and how it allowed you or not, to learn about the history of Latin America. All your discussion should be informed by what you read in the assigned chapter.

10% Final reflection

A two-page document evaluating what you learnt in the class.

We will meet five times throughout the semester. Assignments are due on Thursday by midday and meetings will take place the following week. If you have queries or need to discuss your ideas at any point, please set an appointment with me.

The accumulated points will be converted to letter grades using the following scale:

100-93% =A, 92-90% = A-, 89-87% = B+, 86-83% = B, 82-80% = B-, 79-77% = C+, 76-73% = C, 72-70% = C-, 69-67%= D+, 66-63%= D, 62-60%= D- Anything less than 60% is an F.

About style and sources:

- Please use Times New Roman font size 12, one-inch margins, and double-space in between lines in all your assignments. The student's name, course number, and submission date should be typed in the upper left corner of the first page with single space in between lines. After this header, one blank line should appear before the assignment title, which should be followed by one blank line before beginning the assignment. Contractions (don't, can't, he's) should not be used in academic writing.
- You should not use any secondary sources apart from the assigned readings in writing your papers. Do not use Wikipedia, as it is not a reliable source of information.
- You should take advantage of the Writing Center, which is a free resource for improving your writing. At the Writing Center, trained Moravian students can help you figure out assignments and improve your writing. They can help at any stage of the writing process, whether you have not started the assignment and need help picking a topic, or you are near the end and want to check that everything is in order. And it is not just for help with Writing 100 or English papers—any type of writing can be taken there, including science reports and cover letters. The tutors will first work with you to make sure that all the bigger issues are covered, such as proper citation, fulfilling the assignment, and structure of the paper. Then, they can also help you with spelling, grammar, and mechanics. You can sign up for a half-hour or an hour-long appointment. After your appointment, the tutor you work with will send me a progress report, letting me know that you were there. The Writing Center is on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall and the extension is 1592. Their hours vary each semester, but they are generally open Monday-Thursday

afternoons and evenings, and Sunday evening. Watch your email for an announcement about when the Writing Center opens, generally the third week of the term, which will also include the hours.

- Submit your work via email.
- Back up all your work (in your computer and an external drive) in order to avoid losing your files.

Students with disabilities

- Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact the Academic & Disability Support Office, which is committed to assisting students in the achievement of academic success. Individual appointments and group workshops are available for students who would like to improve their academic performance. Information and programs on time management, study strategies and other academic and learning skills are available. Students can work with the staff to find a tutor or other resources to enhance academic success. In addition, the Academic Disability Support Office coordinates services and support for students with documented learning disabilities and/or ADHD. Students requesting accommodations should contact the Administrative Assistant at 610.861.1510. Students interested in making an appointment with a staff member for academic help or a peer tutor, should contact our office at ext. 1510.
- Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic & Disability Support Office.

Email communication

- I will send you relevant information and contact you when necessary only through your Moravian email account, so please have a look at it frequently. I also expect you to contact me through your college email rather than your personal email.
- Email Etiquette: Whenever you are addressing an email to someone other than a good friend, you need to follow basic email etiquette. Your emails should have a proper greeting (Hello Professor X or Dr. Y, etc.); "Hi there" or just "Hi" is not acceptable. Your message should follow the rules of standard written English (capitalization, spelling, and grammar), and a closing ("Thank you for your help," or "Thank you for your time"). It is always polite to thank the person for reading the email and trying to assist you. Also, be sure to sign the email with your own first and last name. The subject line of your email should be clear and formal. Messages that do not follow this format will not be addressed.
- If you need to discuss something with me please set an appointment. I will be in college everyday but Fridays.

Academic honesty

- Moravian College does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat.
- Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional.
- Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should simply be cited.

- For a more detailed explanation on plagiarism please see the “Academic Honesty at Moravian College” link under Academic Life at the Student Handbook website.
- If you have questions about how to reference others’ works you should look at the referencing advice and explore the suggested websites in the Blackboard site of this course. Also look at <http://moravian.libguides.com/content.php?pid=59393&sid=436064>
- Students suspected of plagiarism or cheating will automatically receive an “F” in the course and will be reported to the appropriate school authorities.

SCHEDULE

Part I: History and Film Due January 30

- Reading: *Stevens, Never Read History Again: The Possibilities and Perils of Cinema as Historical Depiction.*

Write a two-page journal summarizing the main arguments and provide your own evaluation of how film can improve or hinder our understanding of the past.

Part II: Colonial Latin America

- James S. Saeger, *The Mission and Historical Missions: Film and the Writing of History* *The Mission*, directed by Roland Joffé, UK, 1986.

Paper 1 Due February 13

- Susan E. Ramírez, *I, the Worst of All: The Literary Life of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* *I, the Worst of All*, directed by María Luisa Bemberg, Argentina, 1990.

Paper 2 Due February 27

Part III: Modern Latin America

- Barbara A. Tanenbaum, *Why Tita Didn't Marry the Doctor, or Mexican History in Like Water for Chocolate*

Like Water for Chocolate, directed by Alfonso Arau, Mexico, 1992.

Paper 3 Due March 20

- Claire Williams, “*Los diarios de motocicleta* as Pan-American Travelogue,” *Contemporary Latin American Cinema: Breaking Into the Global Market*, ed. Deborah Shaw (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 11-27. Reading available on Blackboard

The Motorcycle Diaries, directed by Walter Salles, Argentina, Chile, Perú, Francia, 2004.

Paper 4 Due April 10

Final Reflection Due April 24

We will not meet to discuss your final reflection