

Religious Studies 2YY3 - The Bible and Film

(Fall 2017—Dr. Philippa Carter)
Wednesdays 7:00 – 10:00 pm, ITB 137

NOTE: The electronic version of this document on Avenue is to be considered authoritative.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

INSTRUCTOR – Dr. Philippa Carter carterph@mcmaster.ca UH 114, ext. 23388.
Office Hours: Thursday: 1:45 – 4:15 or by appointment.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS – TBA

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

An examination of the use of the Bible in a variety of films. Genres may include biblical epic, horror, sci-fi, Western, comedy, film noir, animated feature, music video. Topics include the depiction of biblical themes, images and values in motion pictures as well as their transformation.

DESCRIPTION FOR FALL 2017:

This year we will turn our attention to the themes of the “Promised Land” and the “Chosen People” as presented in the Bible and in mainstream Hollywood cinema with particular attention to the work of Irish-American director, John Ford. We shall view the films with special attention to production values, their (American) cultural context and audience response.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To analyse and engage with biblical narratives and themes.
- To examine how biblical themes reinforce or challenge cultural norms through the medium of film and digital media.
- To cultivate the art (science?) of film appreciation from a variety of perspectives.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- A selection of articles available through the JSTOR database and other sites on-line.
- Students should also have access to an English translation of the Christian Bible. An on-line version can be found at: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/rsv/browse.html>

GRADING AND EVALUATION:

- **Five Quizzes @ 2%** **10%**
 - Multiple choice and short answer on readings and on films screened in class.
 - Available on-line **until 10:00 p.m.** the Friday following class that week.
- **Film Review** **20%**
 - A short review (700 – 1000 words) of a John Ford Western film (“Fort Apache,” “Rio Grande”) not screened in class.
- **Participation & Engagement** **20%**
 - Based on participation in tutorial and on-line discussion.
 - Attendance at film screenings and tutorials **is required**. All students should be prepared to attend class from 7-10 p.m. on Wednesday evenings.
 - NOTE: All films to be screened in this class have a classification of “G”, “PG” or “14A” as determined by the Ontario Film Review Board. According to the OFRB, a film classified as “14A” “May contain: violence, coarse language and/or sexually suggestive scenes.”
- **Five In-Class Written Assignments/Tests @ 10%** **50%**
 - These assignments are designed to encourage engagement with the films and readings through critical analysis and reflection.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

DATE	ASSIGNMENTS, READINGS & VIDEOS	FILM
6 SEP	Video Excerpt: Martin Luther King, Jr., "I've Been to the Mountaintop." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN10nhCz_EA	N/A
13 SEP	Exodus 1-20	N/A
20 SEP	Deuteronomy 26 – 34 George Aichele, "Film Theory and Biblical Studies" in <i>Close Encounters between Bible and Film</i> . Atlanta, SBL Press (2016) 11 – 26. Alan Nadel, "God's Law and the Wide Screen: The Ten Commandments as Cold War 'Epic' PMLA, Vol. 108, No. 3 (1993), pp. 415-430. http://www.jstor.org/stable/462612 QUIZ ONE (10:00 PM 20 SEP – 10:00 PM 22 SEP)	The Ten Commandments (1956)
27 SEP	Philip Green, "Ideology and Ambiguity in Cinema" <i>The Massachusetts Review</i> , Vol. 34, No. 1 (1993), pp. 102 –126. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25090406	The Ten Commandments (1956)
4 OCT	Joshua 1-6 Doug Williams, "Pilgrims and the Promised Land: A Genealogy of the Western" in Kitses and Rickman, <i>The Western Reader</i> . New York: Limelight, 1998, pp 93 – 113. http://www.academia.edu/2357298/Pilgrims_and_the_Promised_Land_A_Genealogy_of_the_Western QUIZ TWO (10:00 PM 4 OCT – 10:00 PM 6 OCT)	Wagonmaster (1950)
11 OCT	READING WEEK – NO CLASS	
18 OCT	Richard Hutson, "John Ford's 'My Darling Clementine' (1946)" <i>Representations</i> , Vol. 84, No. 1 (2003), pp. 200-212. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/rep.2003.84.1.200 IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT ONE (Wagonmaster)	My Darling Clementine (1946)
25 OCT	Philip Green, "Ideology and Ambiguity in Cinema" <i>The Massachusetts Review</i> , Vol. 34, No. 1 (1993), pp. 102 –126. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25090406 (REVIEW) IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT TWO (My Darling Clementine) QUIZ THREE (10:00 PM 25 OCT – 10:00 PM 27 OCT)	Wyatt Earp (2010)
1 NOV	Robert Allen Warrior, "Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians." <i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i> , 59 no 1 - 2 (2005), p 1-8. ATLA0001610949 Janne Lahti, "Silver Screen Savages: Images of Apaches in Motion Pictures." <i>The Journal of Arizona History</i> , Vol. 54, No. 1 (2013), pp. 51-84 http://www.jstor.org/stable/24459198	Stagecoach (1939)
8 NOV	Judges 1 – 5; 18 – 21. IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT THREE (Stagecoach) QUIZ FOUR (10:00 PM 8 NOV – 10:00 PM 10 NOV)	The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence (1962)
13 NOV	Joshua Foa Dienstag, "A Storied Shooting: Liberty Valance and the Paradox of Sovereignty." <i>Political Theory</i> , Vol. 40, No. 3 (2012), pp. 290-318. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41703027 FILM REVIEW DUE: 11:59 PM 21 NOVEMBER	The American West of John Ford (1971) (Tentative)
22 NOV	Robert B. Pippin, "What Is a Western? Politics and Self-Knowledge in John Ford's <i>The Searchers</i> ." <i>Critical Inquiry</i> , Vol. 35, No. 2 (2009), pp. 223-253. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/596641 IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT FOUR (The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence)	The Searchers (1956)
29 NOV	Christopher Sharrett, "Through a Door Darkly: A Reappraisal of John Ford's 'The Searchers'." <i>Cinéaste</i> , Vol. 31, No. 4 (2006), pp. 4-8. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41690395 QUIZ FIVE (10:00 PM 29 NOV – 10:00 PM 1 DEC)	The Searchers (1956)
6 DEC	IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT FIVE (The Searchers)	

THE FINE PRINT

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance is mandatory for all classes and tutorials. Random roll-calls will be conducted throughout the term. Please be considerate of all class-members by arriving on time and staying until class concludes. As a further courtesy, keep the use of electronic devices to a minimum during screenings.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

TURNITIN.COM

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com speak with me immediately. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

AVENUE TO LEARN

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor. PLEASE TURN ON NOTIFICATIONS IN AVENUE!

MCMASTER STUDENT ABSENCE FORM

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015. The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days. The upper limit for which an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight. As per the policy, students must immediately follow up with their instructors to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Failure to do so may negate their relief. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

MSAF is now available in MOSAIC Student Center (in the drop down menu under Academics)

Privacy Disclaimer: By using this tool you understand that some personal information will be submitted to your Faculty Office.

If you find it necessary to submit the MSAF during this course you must arrange for an extension for any work missed. I do not redistribute grades for missed assignments.

NOTE ON CHANGES IN THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check her/his McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

PERSONAL EMAIL POLICY

I no longer respond to grade queries submitted through email. If you need to discuss a grade in the course please consult with your T.A. and then, if necessary, arrange to see me in person. I also do not respond to email messages regarding missed classes. Please plan to acquire missed notes and other information from a fellow student.

WRITTEN WORK AND LATE SUBMISSIONS

- In this course we will be using AVENUE TO LEARN and a web-based service (turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism.
- Students should be aware that, when they access Avenue, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.
- **Students should also be aware that, when they submit written work in the “assignments” page on Avenue, their work will be added to the turnitin.com database for plagiarism detection. The turnitin.com privacy policy is available here: http://turnitin.com/en_us/about-us/privacy-center/privacy-pledge.**
- Continuation in this course will be deemed consent. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.
- All written work will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, and organization, as well as content and analysis. Where footnotes and bibliography are necessary, any protocol is acceptable provided you are consistent.
- All written work must be submitted electronically to Avenue before the due date. ***No hard copies will be accepted. Do not submit assignments by email.***
- **Late assignments will be penalized 3% a day (weekends will count as one day).**
- **PLEASE NOTE: I do not allow for make-up work for missed assignments or participation unless it has to do with accommodating students registered through SAS.**