**RELIGST 2YY3 APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION—FALL 2019**

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### Contact Information

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Philippa Carter carterph@mcmaster.ca

* UH 125, ext. 23388.
* Office hours: Tuesday, 10:30 – noon, Thursday, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m., or by appointment.
* TAs: Mr. Rahim Samnani samnanir@mcmaster.ca; 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 2019

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.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

REQUIRED MATERIALS

* 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/r/rsv/browse.html>
* Students should bring a pen and a 3 X 5 index card to every class.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

* 80% Four written assignments @20%
	+ These assignments are designed to encourage engagement with the films and readings through critical analysis and reflection.
* 10% Class participation
	+ “Think, pair, share” interludes will feature in most class sessions. Attendance at every class is required.
* 10% Tutorial participation

### COURSE SCHEDULE

#### 5 SEPTEMBER – THE MOUNTAINTOP

* Video Excerpt: Martin Luther King, Jr., “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN10nhCz_EA>

#### 12 SEPTEMBER – EXODUS

* READINGS:
	+ Exodus 1-20

#### 19 SEPTEMBER – THE TEN COMMANDMENTS I

* The Ten Commandments (1956)
* READINGS:
	+ Deuteronomy 26 – 34
	+ George Aichele, “Film Theory and Biblical Studies” in *Close Encounters between Bible and Film*. 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>
* Assignment 1 due: 11:59 p.m. Monday, 23 September

#### 26 SEPTEMBER – THE TEN COMMANDMENTS II

* The Ten Commandments (1956)
* READINGS:
	+ Philip Green, “Ideology and Ambiguity in Cinema” The Massachusetts Review, Vol. 34, No. 1 (1993), pp. 102 –126. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25090406>

#### 3 OCTOBER – WAGON MASTER

* Wagon Master (1950)
* READINGS:
	+ Joshua 1-6
	+ Doug Williams, “Pilgrims and the Promised Land: A Genealogy of the Western” in Kitses and Rickman, The Western Reader. New York: Limelight, 1998, pp 93 – 113. <http://www.academia.edu/2357298/Pilgrims_and_the_Promised_Land_A_Genealogy_of_the_Western>

#### 10 OCTOBER – STAGECOACH

* Stagecoach (1939)
* READINGS:
	+ Robert Allen Warrior, “Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians.” *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 59 no 1 - 2 (2005), p 1-8. ATLA0001610949
	+ Janne Lahti, “Silver Screen Savages: Images of Apaches in Motion Pictures.” *The Journal of Arizona History*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (2013), pp. 51-84 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24459198>
* Assignment 2 due: 11:59 p.m., Monday, 21 October

#### 17 OCTOBER – READING WEEK—NO CLASS

#### 24 OCTOBER – MY DARLING CLEMENTINE

* My Darling Clementine (1946)
* READINGS:
	+ Richard Hutson, “John Ford’s ‘My Darling Clementine’ (1946)” Representations, Vol. 84, No. 1 (2003), pp. 200-212. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/rep.2003.84.1.200>

#### 31 OCTOBER – WYATT EARP

* Wyatt Earp (documentary, 2010)
* READINGS:
	+ Philip Green, “Ideology and Ambiguity in Cinema” The Massachusetts Review, Vol. 34, No. 1 (1993), pp. 102 –126. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25090406> (REVIEW)

#### 7 NOVEMBER – THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALENCE

* The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence (1962)
* READINGS:
	+ Judges 1 – 5; 18 – 21
	+ Bordwell, David. "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance." *Film Comment* 7, no. 3 (1971): 18-20. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43752833>

#### 14 NOVEMBER – THE SEARCHERS I

* The Searchers (1956)
* READINGS:
	+ Robert B. Pippin, “What Is a Western? Politics and Self-Knowledge in John Ford's *The Searchers.*” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (2009), pp. 223-253. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/596641>
* Assignment 3 due 11:59 p.m. Monday, 18 November

#### 21 NOVEMBER – THE SEARCHERS II

* The Searchers (1956)
* READINGS:
	+ Christopher Sharrett, “Through a Door Darkly: A Reappraisal of John Ford’s ‘The Searchers’.” *Cinéaste*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (2006), pp. 4-8. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41690395>

#### 28 NOVEMBER

* Wrap-Up
* Assignment 4—Take-Home Test—due: 11:59 p.m. Thursday, 12 December

### THE FINE PRINT

##### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the *Academic Integrity Policy*, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

* Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* Improper collaboration in group work.
* Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

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##### AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

##### ON-LINE COMPONENTS

In this course we will be using Avenue2Learn and turnitin.com. 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. The available information is dependent on the technology used. 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.

##### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. 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 *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

##### REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

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”. ***If you find it necessary to submit the MSAF during this course, you must submit the missed work before the end of classes. I do not redistribute grades for missed assignments.***

##### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

##### EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.