

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century World History: Movie Requirements

Movies can be a powerful tool for learning. As such, I would like you to watch at least 4 movies each semester. (4 is the basic requirement for your movies grade.) *In addition, you will receive 2.5 points extra credit per movie beyond that to be applied to your lowest test grade. (Up to 15 points maximum- or 6 movies.)* This list is not exhaustive. There may be other historical movies you are interested in watching. Please check with me first to see if I will count them. Many of these movies are available on Amazon Prime and some will be at your local library.

Guidelines: You must watch at least one from each category. The first semester you will choose from the 1900- 1950's. The second semester you will choose from the 1960's through the present. Some of the movies are quite violent or have some language in them. Some are rated R. You must ask your parents before watching any movie on this list. I have not seen every one of them and it has been a while for others. *After you watch the movie, write up a short paragraph of your thoughts on the movie.* Include anything that stood out to you or seemed to fit in with what we are learning in class. *Have your parent sign the page* indicating that you watched the movie.

### **Due Dates:**

Fall Semester: The due date for all your movie write-ups is Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>

Spring Semester: The due date for all your movie write-ups is May 20<sup>th</sup>

**\*\*You may do all of them early in the semester if you want and then just focus on extras for extra credit.**

### **First Semester Movies:**

#### **1900- WWI:**

***Sergeant York:*** WWI- Gary Cooper- A marksman is drafted in WWI and becomes one of the most celebrated war heroes.

***The Little Princess:*** (Shirley Temple movie). She took people's minds off their troubles during the Great Depression. The movie itself about the Boer War- early 1900's.

***War Horse:*** Young Albert enlists to serve in World War I after his beloved horse is sold to the cavalry. Albert's hopeful journey takes him out of England and to the front lines as the war rages on.

**Gallipoli:** (1981 version) (Has a very young Mel Gibson) Two Australian sprinters face the brutal realities of war when they are sent to fight in the Gallipoli campaign in Turkey during World War I.

**Lawrence of Arabia:** The story of [T.E. Lawrence](#), the English officer who successfully united and led the diverse, often warring, Arab tribes during World War I in order to fight the Turks.

**They Shall Now Grow Old:** This recent WWI documentary movie by Peter Jackson uses groundbreaking technology and state-of-the-art restoration and 3D technologies to original footage from WWI. The only narration comes from Great War veterans themselves. Warning- it does not hold back from showing the violence and brutality of this war. In fact, it is fairly gruesome in places.

### 1920's-1930's (Roarin' Twenties, Great Depression, Dust Bowl)

**Grapes of Wrath:** (1940 version) A poor Midwest family is forced off their land. They travel to California, suffering the misfortunes of the homeless in the Great Depression.

**Cinderella Man:** (2005 version with Russell Crowe and Renee Zellweger) The story of James Braddock, a supposedly washed-up boxer who came back to become a champion and an inspiration in the 1930s.

**Gandhi-** (Ben Kingsley- story of Gandhi's role in the granting of independence to India- 1930's)

**Thoroughly Modern Millie:** (Julie Andrews- 1920's)

**The Dust Bowl :** A documentary by Ken Burns (This is one you can probably get at the library or download on i-tunes.)

**The King's Speech:** Story of King George VI, father of current Queen Elizabeth, who unexpectedly became king after his brother abdicated. This story shows how he overcame stammering to fulfill his duties. Note: This is rated R for language. (Most of the language is limited to one scene.)

**Tea with Mussolini:** An orphaned Italian boy is raised among a circle of British and American women living in Mussolini's Italy before and during the Second World War.

**Race:** A movie based on the life of Jesse Owens, a black American athlete who won several events at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.

### WWII

**Tora, Tora, Tora:** Story of Pearl Harbor from both the American and Japanese point of view.

***The Bridge on the River Kwai***: WWII- Japanese prisoner of war camp. After settling his differences with a Japanese PoW camp commander, a British colonel co-operates to oversee his men's construction of a railway bridge for their captors - while oblivious to a plan by the Allies to destroy it.

***The Best Years of our Lives***: (1946) Three World War II veterans return home to small-town America to discover that they and their families have been irreparably changed.

***Fat Man and Little Boy***: Story of the Manhattan Project and the development of the atom bomb. The title refers to the nicknames given the atom bombs dropped on Japan.

***Schindler's List***: (1993- Liam Neeson, Rated R) In German-occupied Poland during World War II, Oskar Schindler gradually becomes concerned for his Jewish workforce after witnessing their persecution by the Nazi Germans.

***Life is Beautiful***: (PG-13- 1997- In Italian with English subtitles. I love this film. It is absolutely beautiful.) When an open-minded Jewish librarian and his son become victims of the Holocaust, he uses a perfect mixture of will, humor, and imagination to protect his son from the dangers around their camp.

***Saving Private Ryan***: D-Day+. This is graphic, but very educational about the realities of WWII. Opening with the Allied invasion of Normandy on 6 June 1944, members of the 2nd Ranger Battalion under Cpt. Miller fight ashore to secure a beachhead. Amidst the fighting, two brothers are killed in action. Earlier in New Guinea, a third brother is KIA. Their mother, Mrs. Ryan, is to receive all three of the grave telegrams on the same day. The United States Army Chief of Staff, George C. Marshall, is given an opportunity to alleviate some of her grief when he learns of a fourth brother, Private James Ryan, and decides to send out 8 men (Cpt. Miller and select members from 2nd Rangers) to find him and bring him back home to his mother...

***The Pianist***: (Rated R-This film is very violent and has some language.) A Polish Jewish musician struggles to survive the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto of World War II.

***The Boy in the Striped Pajamas***: (PG-13) Set during WWII, a story seen through the innocent eyes of Bruno, the eight-year-old son of the commandant at a German concentration camp, whose forbidden friendship with a Jewish boy on the other side of the camp fence has startling and unexpected consequences.

***The Book Thief***: (PG-13, 2013) While subjected to the horrors of World War II Germany, young Liesel finds solace by stealing books and sharing them with others. In the basement of her home, a Jewish refugee is being protected by her adoptive parents.

***Darkest Hour***: (PG-13, 2017) In May 1940, the fate of Western Europe hangs on British Prime Minister [Winston Churchill](#), who must decide whether to negotiate with [Adolf Hitler](#), or fight on knowing that it could mean a humiliating defeat for Britain and its empire.

***The Monuments Men:*** (PG-13, 2014, George Clooney) An unlikely World War II platoon is tasked to rescue art masterpieces from Nazi thieves and return them to their owners.

***The Longest Day*** (1962) The events of D-Day, told on a grand scale from both the Allied and German points of view. (This movie is like *Saving Private Ryan*, but less Graphic.)

***Patton:*** (1970) The World War II phase of the career of the controversial American general, [George S. Patton](#).

***Imitation Game:*** (PG-13, Benedict Cumberbatch) During World War II, the English mathematical genius [Alan Turing](#) tries to crack the German Enigma code with help from fellow mathematicians.

## Second Semester Movies:

Late 1940's, 1950's - 1960's Cold War, Civil Rights, Vietnam, Space Race
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**42:** (PG-13) In 1947, [Jackie Robinson](#) becomes the first African-American to play in Major League Baseball in the modern era when he was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers and faces considerable racism in the process.

***A United Kingdom:*** (PG-13, David Oyelowo, Rosamund Pike, 2016, This is an excellent movie.) In the late 1940s, Prince Seretse Khama of Bechuanaland is studying law in Britain in preparation for his eventual ascension to the throne. There, the dashing prince falls in love with a white British clerk, Ruth Williams, and they plan to marry. While they suspect that his uncle, the Regent, would disapprove, nothing prepares them for the diplomatic firestorm and domestic political tumult their defiant love would spark. Now facing a citizenry leery of a white Briton as their Queen, the international opposition is even more unyielding from the British holding their land as a protectorate and fearful of South Africa's racist backlash to this affront to their apartheid domination. Against all odds, King Khama and Ruth must struggle to maintain their love and help their people in a land that would become the Republic of Botswana.

***October Sky:*** (PG- This is a great movie!) The true story of Homer Hickam, a coal miner's son who was inspired by the first Sputnik launch to take up rocketry against his father's wishes.

***Bridge of Spies:*** (PG-13- Tom Hanks- Another excellent movie.) In the cold war, a lawyer, James B. Donovan is recruited by the CIA and involved in an intense negotiation mission to release and exchange a CIA U-2 spy-plane pilot, Francis G. Powers. The pilot was arrested alive after his plane was shot down by the Soviet Union during a mission and stays in the company of a KGB intelligence officer, Rudolf Abel, who was arrested for espionage in the US.

***Good Night and Good Luck:*** The conflict between veteran radio and television journalist [Edward R. Murrow](#) and U.S. Senator [Joseph McCarthy](#) relating to the [anti-Communist](#) Senator's actions with the [Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations](#)

**Thirteen Days:** (PG-13, Kevin Costner) In October, 1962, U-2 surveillance photos reveal that the Soviet Union is in the process of placing nuclear weapons in Cuba. These weapons have the capability of wiping out most of the Eastern and Southern United States in minutes if they become operational. President John F. Kennedy and his advisors must come up with a plan of action against the Soviets. Kennedy is determined to show that he is strong enough to stand up to the threat, and the Pentagon advises U.S. military strikes against Cuba-- which could lead the way to another U.S. invasion of the island. However, Kennedy is reluctant to follow through, because a U.S. invasion could cause the Soviets to retaliate in Europe. A nuclear showdown appears to be almost inevitable. Can it be prevented?

**Mississippi Burning:** (R- About Freedom Summer. I have not seen this and it looks to be very violent, but representative of the time. It was put on the list, by the prior teacher.) Two F.B.I. Agents, with wildly different styles, arrive in Mississippi to investigate the disappearance of some civil rights activists.

**The Killing Fields:** (R) [Sydney Schanberg](#) is a New York Times journalist covering the civil war in Cambodia. Together with the local journalist [Dith Pran](#), they cover some of the tragedy and madness of the war. When the American forces leave, Dith Pran sends his family with them, but stays behind himself to help Schanberg cover the event. As an American, Schanberg won't have any trouble leaving the country, but the situation is different for Pran; he's a local, and the Khmer Rouge are moving in.

**Selma:** (PG-13) The unforgettable true story chronicles the tumultuous three-month period in 1965, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a dangerous campaign to secure equal voting rights in the face of violent opposition. The epic march from Selma to Montgomery culminated in President Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the most significant victories for the civil rights movement. Director Ava DuVernay's "Selma" tells the story of how the revered leader and visionary Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr and his brothers and sisters in the movement prompted change that forever altered history.

**The Help:** (I highly recommend this movie. Rated PG-13) Set in Mississippi during the 1960s, Skeeter (Stone) is a southern society girl who returns from college determined to become a writer, but turns her friends' lives -- and a Mississippi town -- upside down when she decides to interview the black women who have spent their lives taking care of prominent southern families. Aibileen (Davis), Skeeter's best friend's housekeeper, is the first to open up -- to the dismay of her friends in the tight-knit black community. Despite Skeeter's life-long friendships hanging in the balance, she and Aibileen continue their collaboration and soon more women come forward to tell their stories -- and as it turns out, they have a lot to say. Along the way, unlikely friendships are forged and a new sisterhood emerges, but not before everyone in town has a thing or two to say themselves when they become unwittingly -- and unwillingly -- caught up in the changing times.

**Hidden Figures:** (PG, 1916- another great movie.) As the United States raced against Russia to put a man in space, NASA found untapped talent in a group of African-American female mathematicians that served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in U.S. history. Based on the unbelievably true life stories of three of these women, known as "human computers", we follow these women as they quickly rose the ranks of NASA alongside many of history's greatest minds specifically tasked with calculating the momentous launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, and guaranteeing his safe return. Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, and Katherine Goble Johnson crossed all gender, race,

and professional lines while their brilliance and desire to dream big, beyond anything ever accomplished before by the human race, firmly cemented them in U.S. history as true American heroes

***We Were Soldiers:*** (2002, Mel Gibson, Rated R) The story of the first major battle of the American phase of the Vietnam War, and the soldiers on both sides that fought it, while their wives wait nervously and anxiously at home for the good news or the bad news.

A telling of the 1st Battalion, 7 Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division's battle against overwhelming odds in the La Drang valley of Vietnam in 1965. Seen through the eyes of the battalion's commander, Lieutenant Colonel Hal Moore (played by Mel Gibson), we see him take command of the battalion and its preparations to go into Vietnam. We also see how the French had, years earlier, been defeated in the same area. The battle was to be the first major engagement between U.S. and N.V.A. forces in South Vietnam, and showed the use of helicopters as mobility providers and assault support aircraft.

***The Right Stuff:*** (PG, Sam Shepard, Ed Harris, 1983) [Tom Wolfe's](#) book on the history of the U.S. Space program reads like a novel, and the film has that same fictional quality. It covers the breaking of the sound barrier by [Chuck Yeager](#) to the Mercury 7 astronauts, showing that no one had a clue how to run a space program or how to select people to be in it. Thrilling, funny, charming and electrifying all at once.

***First Man:*** (2018, Ryan Gosling, Claire Foy) A Biopic on the life of the legendary American Astronaut Neil Armstrong from 1961-1969, on his journey to becoming the first human to walk the moon. Exploring the sacrifices and costs on the Nation and Neil himself, during one of the most dangerous missions in the history of space travel.

<b>1970's -1990's- Cold war continued, Fall of USSR,</b>
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***Apollo 13:*** (PG-13, Tom Hanks) Based on the true story of the ill-fated 13th Apollo mission bound for the moon. Astronauts Lovell, Haise and Swigert were scheduled to fly Apollo 14, but are moved up to 13. It's 1970, and The US has already achieved their lunar landing goal, so there's little interest in this "routine" flight.. until that is, things go very wrong, and prospects of a safe return fade.

***Secretariat: (PG)*** Penny Chenery Tweedy and colleagues guide her long-shot but precocious stallion to set, in 1973, the unbeaten record for winning the Triple Crown.

***All the President's Men:*** (PG, 1978, Robert Redford, Dustin Hoffman) "The Washington Post" reporters [Bob Woodward](#) and [Carl Bernstein](#) uncover the details of the Watergate scandal that leads to President [Richard Nixon's](#) resignation.

***First They Killed My Father:*** (TV-MA- Netflix, coming out Sept. 2018) In the 70's, a Cambodian middle-class girl sees the lives of her family and her turning upside-down when the Khmer Rouge invades the Cambodia. They leave their comfortable apartment and lifestyle to live in a primitive working camp. Her father, a former officer, is killed and the family splits to survive.

**The Last King of Scotland:** (Rated- R) In the early 1970s Nicholas Garrigan, a young semi-idealistic Scottish doctor, comes to Uganda to assist in a rural hospital. Once there he soon meets up with the new President, *Idi Amin*, who promises a golden age for the African nation. Garrigan hits it off immediately with the rabid Scotland fan, who soon offers him a senior position in the national health department and becomes one of Amin's closest advisers. However as the years pass, Garrigan cannot help but notice Amin's increasingly erratic behavior that grows beyond a legitimate fear of assassination into a murderous insanity that is driving Uganda into bloody ruin. Realizing his dire situation with the lunatic leader unwilling to let him go home, Garrigan must make some crucial decisions that could mean his death if the despot finds out.

**Argo:** (Rated R- has significant language and one scene of scantily clad individuals. It is an excellent rendering, though, of the events depicted.) In 1979, the American embassy in Iran was invaded by Iranian revolutionaries and several Americans were taken hostage. However, six managed to escape to the official residence of the Canadian Ambassador and the CIA was ordered to get them out of the country. With few options, exfiltration expert Tony Mendez devised a daring plan: create a phony Canadian film project looking to shoot in Iran and smuggle the Americans out as its production crew. With the help of some trusted Hollywood contacts, Mendez created the ruse and proceeded to Iran as its associate producer. However, time was running out with the Iranian security forces closing in on the truth while both his charges and the White House had grave doubts about the operation themselves.

**The Hunt for Red October:** In November 1984, the Soviet Union's best submarine captain in their newest sub violates orders and heads for the U.S. Is he trying to defect or to start a war?

**Hotel Rwanda:** (PG-13, 2004, Don Cheadle- This is a good movie.) Paul Rusesabagina was a hotel manager who housed over a thousand Tutsi refugees during their struggle against the Hutu militia in Rwanda. Set during the Rwandan Genocide in 1994.

**Invictus:** (PG-13, Matt Damon, Morgan Freeman) The film tells the inspiring true story of how Nelson Mandela joined forces with the captain of South Africa's rugby team to help unite their country. Newly elected President Mandela knows his nation remains racially and economically divided in the wake of apartheid. Believing he can bring his people together through the universal language of sport, Mandela rallies South Africa's rugby team as they make their historic run to the 1995 Rugby World Cup Championship match.

**Blackhawk Down:** (Rated R for violence and language.) Action/war drama based on the best-selling book detailing a near-disastrous mission in Somalia on October 3, 1993. On this date nearly 100 U.S. Army Rangers, commanded by Capt. Mike Steele, were dropped by helicopter deep into the capital city of Mogadishu to capture two top lieutenants of a Somali warlord. This led to a large and drawn-out firefight between the Army Rangers, US Special Forces, and hundreds of Somali gunmen; resulting in the destruction of two U.S. Black Hawk helicopters. The film focuses on the heroic efforts of various Rangers to get to the downed black hawks, centering on SSG Eversmann, leading the Ranger unit Chalk Four to the first black hawk crash site, Chief Warrant Officer Durant who was captured after being the only survivor of the second black hawk crash, as well as many others who were involved

**Columbine Documentary:** You can find a good documentary about the school shooting at Columbine on-line.

## 2000- Present

**United 93:** A real-time account of the events on United Flight 93, one of the planes hijacked on September 11th, 2001 that crashed near Shanksville, Pennsylvania when passengers foiled the terrorist plot.

**The Impossible:** (PG-13, Naomi Watts) The story of a tourist family in Thailand caught in the destruction and chaotic aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

**Concussion:** (PG-13, 2015, Will Smith, An excellent movie.) Will Smith stars in Concussion, a dramatic thriller based on the incredible true David vs. Goliath story of American immigrant Dr. Bennet Omalu, the brilliant forensic neuropathologist who made the first discovery of CTE, a football-related brain trauma, in a pro player and fought for the truth to be known. Omalu's emotional quest puts him at dangerous odds with one of the most powerful institutions in the world. *Written by [Sony Pictures Entertainment](#)*

**Captain Phillips:** (PG-13, Tom Hanks) The true story of Captain Richard Phillips and the 2009 hijacking by Somali pirates of the U.S.-flagged MV Maersk Alabama, the first American cargo ship to be hijacked in two hundred years.

**Thirteen Hours:** (R, John Krasinski) Libya, 2012. At an unofficial CIA base in Benghazi a group of ex-military contractors are providing security. In the aftermath of Gaddafi's downfall a power vacuum exists and the climate is volatile. Military weapons are freely available. The US Ambassador to Libya, Chris Stevens, makes a visit to the area, staying in a compound near the CIA base. On the night of 11 September, 2012, the Ambassador's compound is attacked by hordes of heavily armed locals. The only forces willing and able to defend it are six CIA contractors

**The Hurt Locker:** (R, Jeremy Renner) During the Iraq War, a Sergeant recently assigned to an army bomb squad is put at odds with his squad mates due to his maverick way of handling his work.

**American Sniper:** ( R, Bradley Cooper) Navy S.E.A.L. sniper Chris Kyle's pinpoint accuracy saves countless lives on the battlefield and turns him into a legend. Back home to his wife and kids after four tours of duty, however, Chris finds that it is the war he can't leave behind.

**Deepwater Horizon:** This movie dramatizes the events of the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 that killed several crew members.