a-g US History Through Film

Gorman Learning Center (052344)

Basic Course Information

Title:
a-g US History Through Film
Transcript abbreviations:
us hist a / us hist b
Length of course:
Full Year
Subject area:
College-Preparatory Elective ("g") / History / Social Science
UC honors designation?
No
Prerequisites:
None
Co-requisites:
None
Integrated (Academics / CTE)?
No
Grade levels:
11th, 12th
Course learning environment:
Online

Course Description

Course overview:

This US History course examines the ways in which the major themes and issues in modern American history have been expressed in the iconic films from the 20th century. As they build on their knowledge of American history from 11th grade, students will explore the significance of films as primary sources: What do the films like Birth of a Nation, Hard Times or The Graduate reveal about the period in which they were produced? How do the movies reflect the major social issues, conflicts or changes of the time? How did popular films inform or influence the country in the 20th century? By watching, discussing, and writing about American films, students will examine how motion pictures reflect and influence American culture and society. In other words, students will learn how to “read” American films as cultural texts that support a deeper understanding of 20th century American history.

Course content:
Unit 1: Industrialized Entertainment
As we begin the year, students will review the major political, economic, social and cultural events in turn-of-the-century America, identifying significant cultural trends and shifts as they go along. In this unit we will emphasize the enormous technological innovations of the period and the impact new technologies and developments had on daily life. We will watch the experimental films of Thomas Edison and the Lumiere brothers, and explore the promise the new technology held. For example, the reformer Jane Addams asserted that moving pictures would be the medium through which Progressives could inspire change. To what extent was that accurate? What impact did early films have?

Throughout this unit we will explore the following questions: In what ways were early films a product of the period in which they were made and viewed? What other innovations of the turn-of-the-century were necessary for the moving picture industry to flourish? What did the immediate fascination with the new medium reveal about the period? What impact did these films have on American society and culture?

Comparing Primary Sources: Students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources related to the short, experimental films we will watch in this unit. In this first unit, students will practice close reading, analyzing the primary sources and searching for evidence from each source to explore the extent to which early films were a legitimate representation of the period.

**Reading:**

- Selections from David Kennedy, et al, *The American Pageant*
- James Lorence, *Screening America*, Chapter 1

**Primary Sources** (Lorence, Chapter 1):

- “Literary Inspiration for a Corner in Wheat”
- “US Senator Robert LaFollette Attacks Financial Manipulators”
- “The Selling of A Corner in Wheat”

**Screenings:**

- Various Thomas Edison shorts
- *Sortie des Usines Lumière à Lyon* (Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory, 1895)
- *L’Arrivée d’un Train en Gare de La Ciotat* (The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station, 1895)
- *Le Voyage dans la Lune* (A Trip to the Moon, 1902)
- *The Great Train Robbery* (1903)
- *A Corner in Wheat* (1909)

**Unit Assignment(s):**

Example Assignments:
HW 1: Current Event

HW 2: Read pages S2 to S33 and Chapter 1 and complete Chapter 1 assessment on page 42

Quiz 1: Covers Chapter 1

HW 3: Read Chapter 2 and complete chapter assessment page 80

Test 1: Covers Chapters 1 and 2

Unit 2: The Silent Era: Social Upheaval on the Big Screen

In this unit, students will review the major political, economic, social and cultural events of the "Roaring 20s", identifying the major cultural trends and shifts of the period. As we examine the enormous social and cultural changes that took place in the 1920s we will consider how those changes were either reflected in the popular films of the period or inspired by the films of the decade. For example, what does the incredible popularity of the racist films like Birth of a Nation or The Jazz Singer reveal about 1920s society? How did the controversies surrounding Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans and Dancing Mothers reflect the cultural conflicts of the decade?

Students will explore some key questions regarding the significance of these films to "Roaring 20s": To what extent were the social disruptions of the decade inspired by-or reflected in-the movies of the Silent Era? What role did popular films play in shaping the culture of the decade? How did the rise of mass culture impact the nation?

Using Primary Sources: For each film, students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources. Students will practice "close reading" strategies, analyzing these primary sources, searching for evidence from each source to explore the extent to which the films represented the major social and cultural shifts of the Roaring 20s.

Writing Assignment: The Motion Picture Production (Hays) Code: Using this source, specifically, students will create a brief 2-3 page response to the following questions: In what does the Hays Code confirm what we understand about 1920s America? In what ways does the Hays Code shed new light on our understanding of the period? Use evidence from the films and primary source readings along with historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

Readings:

- Selections from Kennedy
- Lewis, 42-101, 110-117
- Lorence, Chapters 2 and 3
Primary Sources:

- “The NAACP Challenges Hollywood to Respect the Will of the National Board of Censorship”
- “NAACP Mobilizes National Resistance to the Screening of a Racist Film”
- “The Film’s Producers React to the Threat of Censorship”
- “NAACP Considers a Film as an Answer to The Birth of a Nation”
- “Elinor Glyn Describes “It”
- “Suzanne LaFollette Describes a New Attitude on Divorce”
- “Frederick Lewis Allen Assesses the Impact of the Movies and the Producers’ Response to the Critics”
- “The Motion Picture Code Prescribes Appropriate Treatment of Sexual Issues and Relationships”

Screenings:

- Various D.W. Griffith Biograph Shorts (1909-1913, varying lengths)
- A Dog’s Life (Charlie Chaplin, 1918, 33 min.)
- Sherlock Jr. (1924, Buster Keaton, 44 min.).
- Birth of a Nation (1915, DW Griffith, 3 hours, 10 min.)
- Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (1927, F.W. Murnau, 95 min.)
- Dancing Mothers (1926, Herbert Brenon, 1 hour, 5 min.)

Film Clips:

- Our Gang
- Metropolis (1927, Fritz Lang, 1927)

Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:

__ HW 4: Read The Living Constitution and complete assessment on p. 106
__ Project 1: American Revolution Project due
__ HW 5: Read Chapter 3 and complete assessment on p. 152
__ Quiz 2: Covers Chapter 3
__ HW 6: Read Chapter 4 and complete assessment on p. 190
__ Quiz 3: Covers Chapter 4
Unit 3: Confronting & Avoiding “Unpleasant Realities” in the Great Depression

In this unit, students will review the major political, economic, social and cultural events of the Great Depression. Students will view several films from the period, including *The Gold Diggers of 1933*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. In addition to exploring the idea that popular movies offered an escape from the problems of the Depression, we will also study what the films reveal about American culture and society in the Great Depression.

Students will explore some key questions regarding the significance of these films to history of the Great Depression: While some films exposed Americans to the plight of their countrymen in places like the Dust Bowl, how did movie theaters provide refuge from the challenges of Depression life? In what ways were the glitzy musicals and light-hearted comedies and romantic films a distraction from the problems that plagued the nation? How are elements of American society (especially gender, race and class) depicted in these popular movies?

**Using Primary Sources:** For each film, students will read a selection of primary sources, including movie reviews from the time period. Students will practice "close reading" strategies, analyzing these primary sources, searching for evidence from each source to support or refute the idea that Hollywood films served as a temporary escape from the problems of the Great Depression.

**Writing Assignment: Gender, Class and Race in *Gold Diggers of 1933***: Using this film specifically, students will write a brief 2-3 page response to the following question: Although *Gold Diggers of 1933* was intended to entertain and awe audiences, we can still learn much about the 1930s from this film. How are issues of class differences depicted in the film? What images of women and/or gender roles projected in the film? How are authority figures represented in the film? What does this film reveal about America in the Great Depression? Use specific evidence from the film, primary source readings and historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

**Reading:**

- Selections from Kennedy
- Carnes, “The Grapes of Wrath” (by Alan Brinkley)
- Mintz and Roberts, p. 71-119
- Lorence, Chapters 5 and 6
- Lewis, 118-145

**Primary Sources:** (Lorence, Chapters 5 and 6)

- “A Recollection of the Bonus March”
- “The Exhilarating Depression of FDR”
- “Director Mervyn LeRoy Assesses the Market”
- “A Social Historian Recalls Avoidance of Unpleasant Realities”
• “The Migrant Mother” (Dorothea Lange photograph)
• “John Steinbeck Recalls the Migrant Experience
• Californians React to Steinbeck’s Portrayal of Golden California
• An ‘Okie’ view of the Film from Woodie Guthrie

Screenings:

• City Lights (1931)
• Gold Diggers of 1933 (1933)
• Duck Soup (1933)
• The Wizard of Oz (1939)
• The Grapes of Wrath (1940)

Film Clips:

• Our Gang shorts
• Segments: That’s Entertainment! (various MGM musical numbers, 1974)
• Snow White, 1938

Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:

___ Project 1: American Revolution Project due
___ HW 5: Read Chapter 3 and complete assessment on p. 152
___ Quiz 2: Covers Chapter 3
___ HW 6: Read Chapter 4 and complete assessment on p. 190
___ Quiz 3: Covers Chapter 4
___ Project 2: Civil War Project due (guidelines handed out in class)
___ Test 2: Covers Chapters 3 and 4

Unit 4: Propaganda or Entertainment? Blurring the Lines in World War II

This unit focuses on the impact of World War II on the home front during and immediately after the war. We will explore the strategies Hollywood used to promote intervention in the years leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Next, we consider the partnership between film studios and federal agencies like these Office of War Information. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the government enlisted the biggest names in Hollywood to produce films to rally public support for the war effort. However, it was often difficult to differentiate government propaganda from Hollywood commercial projects, as studios saw the beyond the moral imperative of eliminating dissent on the home front to the profits war-related movies could bring. Finally we consider Americans’ concerns about the outcomes and effects of the war from 1945-1950. Students will
view several films from the period, including *Yankee Doodle Dandy*, *Since You Went Away*, *The Best Years of Our Lives* and *Casablanca*.

Students will be asked to reflect on some key questions: How did Hollywood promote and support the war effort at every stage? In what ways did Hollywood shape or impact the home front? In other words, to what extent did Hollywood "teach" Americans what it meant to do their part?

**Using Primary Sources:** For each film, students will practice "close readings" of primary sources related to the World War II home front, including movie reviews of the films we will watch from the time period. Students will use these sources for the writing assignment below.

**Writing Assignment:** Students will write a 2-3 page response to the following questions: How did Americans on the home front do their part for the war effort? What connection do you see between the efforts of American civilians and the themes/messages of Hollywood movies? In other words, in what ways did movies inspire Americans to take in active role in the war effort? Use specific evidence from the films, primary source readings and historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

**Reading:**

- Mintz and Roberts, pp. 129-174
- Lorence, Chapters 8 and 9
- Lewis, 147-191

**Primary Sources:** Lorence, Chapters 8 and 9

- “A Hollywood Executive Sees a Connection among Good Business, Good Propaganda, and Good Policy”
- “Senator Gerald P Nye Speaks Out for the Isolationists Against Alleged Hollywood Propaganda”
- “The Army States its Objectives for the *Why We Fight* Series”
- “An Interdepartmental Analysis of *Prelude to War* Prepares the Way for Widespread Civilian Distribution”
- “The Office of War Information’s Director Explains the Agency’s Reservations about the Public Distribution of Prelude to War”
- “OWI Outlines Hollywood’s Wartime Responsibilities”
- “A Recollection of Wartime Sacrifice”
- “A Wartime Analysis of Selznick’s Work from *Time*”

**Screenings:**

- *Casablanca* (1942)
- *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (1942)
- *Prelude to War: Why We Fight* (1943)
- *Since You Went Away* (1944)
• *Best Years of Our Lives* (1946)

**Film Clips:**

• Various Warner Bros. and Disney propaganda shorts

**Unit Assignment(s):**

Example Assignments:

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__HW 8: Read Chapter 5 and complete chapter assessment p. 226__

__Quiz 4: Covers Chapter 5__

__HW 9: Read Chapter 6 and complete chapter assessment p. 250__

__HW 10: Workbook pages 26 (A only) and 27 (all parts)__

__Test 3: Covers Chapters 5 and 6__

__HW 11: Read Chapter 7 and complete chapter assessment p. 272__

__Quiz 5: Covers Chapter 7__

**Unit 5: Cold War Fears on Film**

After a brief review of the major events of the early Cold War with an emphasis on the 2nd Red Scare and McCarthyism, students will view several films with Cold War themes, including *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *Rear Window* and *Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. As the Soviet Union and the United States raced to build massive weapons stockpiles during the early decades of the Cold War, “mutually assured destruction” became a terrifying possibility. Countering the threat of the “Red Menace” also seemed to require the elimination of diversity and dissent in all aspects of American life. Although many Hollywood studios avoided controversial story lines in the post-war period, filmmakers of the period often used allegory, terror and humor to comment on the Cold War and the tolls it took on American social and cultural life.

Students will consider the following questions: How did allegorical films address Cold War fears in a way that more realistic films could not? How is the Cold War and its impact on American society portrayed on the big screen? What message(s) do you think filmmakers were trying to express?

**Using Primary Sources:** For each film, students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources related to the Cold War, including movie reviews of the films we will watch from the time period. These primary sources will provide supporting evidence for the writing assignment.
Writing Assignment: Students will write a brief 2-3 page response to the following prompt: Compare and/or contrast two films we viewed in class. How were the Cold War themes of each movie similar? Use specific evidence from the films, primary source readings and historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

Readings:

- Carnes, “Dr. Strangelove” (Paul Boyer)
- Lewis, 193-210, 233-264, 273-279
- Lorence, Chapters 10, 11
- Mintz and Roberts, pp. 175-230

Primary Sources:

- “SANE Launches the Debate over Nuclear Proliferation”
- “Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara Explains Assured Destruction”
- “Journalist I.F. Stone Reads the Lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis”
- “Terry Southern Recalls the Origins of Dr. Strangelove”
- “Ambivalence in a New York Times Review”

Screenings:

- The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951)
- High Noon (1952)
- Rear Window (1954)
- On the Waterfront (1954)
- The Manchurian Candidate (1962)
- Dr. Strangelove (1964)
- Failsafe (1964)

Clips:

- Them! (1954)
- The Salt of the Earth (1954)

Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:

HW 12: Read Chapter 8 and complete chapter assessment p. 300
___ Test 4: Covers Chapters 7 and 8
As the unit begins, we will review the social, political, economic and cultural changes of the post-war period. We will reconsider the factors that contributed to the economic boom that followed the war and the emergence of a massive middle class that enjoyed a higher standard of living than any previous generation. With this prosperity emerged an homogenized “American” culture that glorified the middle-class family, clearly delineated gender roles and strictly regulated social habits. The Baby Boom of the period also ushered in “youth culture” and the accompanying concern that spoiled American youngsters were growing up in a period void of the values and ethics of previous American generations and that they were moving head-long toward “juvenile delinquency”. Although social conformity was widespread, voices of dissent and criticism could still be heard. Students will explore this ideas by watching films like Rebel Without a Cause, Invasion of the Body Snatchers and Bachelor in Paradise.

In this unit, students will consider the following questions: How did Hollywood both reinforce and challenge the social norms of the era? Did the popular films from “The Long 1950s” help promote social conformity or challenge the culture’s understanding of what it meant to be an American?

Using Primary Sources: For each film, students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources related to the Fifties, including movie reviews of the films we will watch from the time period. These primary sources will provide supporting evidence for the writing assignment.

Writing Assignment: Students will write a brief 2-3 page response to the following prompt: Analyze the ways in which one film we viewed in class promoted social conformity in the 1950s. Contrast that film with another movie we viewed in class and identify how the second film challenged conformity in the 1950s. Use specific evidence from the films, primary source readings and historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

Readings:

- Selections from Kennedy
- Mintz and Roberts, pp. 219-233

Screenings:

- Rebel without a Cause (1955)
- Man in the Gray Flannel Suit (1954)
- Bachelor in Paradise (1961)
- Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)
Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:

___ HW 15: Complete Semester Final Study Guide
___ Test 6: Semester Final: Covers chapters 1 through 10

Unit 7: Confronting Race at the Movies

This unit begins with a quick review of the major events and achievements of the Civil Rights Movement during which the nation confronted and worked to address racial inequality. Students will watch ground-breaking films from the early 1960s such as *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Guess Who's Coming Dinner?* and consider how these films reflected the changing times or served as an inspiration for social change.

Using Primary Sources: For each film, students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources related to the Fifties, including movie reviews of the films we will watch from the time period. These primary sources will provide supporting evidence for the writing assignment.

Writing Assignment: Students will write a brief 2-3 page response to the prompt of their choosing:

To what extent did American cinema reinforce stereotypes and bigotry? Or, instead, was Hollywood a force for change in American life, compelling Americans to reassess their perspectives on race?

How were achievements of the Civil Rights Movement celebrated in each of the films we watched in this unit? According to the films were screened in class, what issues or challenges remain, in spite of advancements of the Civil Rights Movement? Use specific evidence from the films, primary source readings and historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

Readings:

- Selections from Kennedy
- Mintz and Roberts, pp. 272-280

Screenings:

- *The Searchers* (1956)
- *Raisin in the Sun* (1961)
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962)
- *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?* (1967)

Clips:
Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:

___ HW 16: Read Chapter 11 and complete chapter assessment p. 406
___ Quiz 7: Covers Chapters 11
___ HW 17: Workbook pages 44 (A and B), 45 (A only), and 47 (all)
___ Test 7: Covers Chapter 11
___ HW 18: Read Chapter 12 and complete chapter assessment p. 430
___ Quiz 8: Covers Chapter 12
___ HW 19: Read Chapter 13 and complete chapter assessment p. 460
___ Test 8: Covers Chapters 12 and 13

Unit 8: The Sixties (Counter?)Culture

This unit will begin by reviewing the major political, economic, social changes of the 1960s and the cultural shifts that resulted. Although many families in the Fifties enjoyed unparalleled prosperity and opportunity following World War II, many young people in the Sixties believed their parents’ generation had been stifling: the consumer culture of the 1950s glorified materialism and wealth and many Americans had been largely excluded from the American Dream. Even the United States’ position as the world’s leading superpower had drawn us in to conflicts abroad, and our interventionist foreign policy was viewed with increasing skepticism. By the 1960s, many young people sought to redefine the values and priorities of the nation, ushering in an era of unprecedented political, social and cultural change. In this unit we will watch films such as The Graduate, The Monkees: Head and Breakfast at Tiffany's in addition to clips from a variety of movies.

Students will consider these questions throughout the unit: To what extent did films from the Sixties communicate the goals and priorities of the social revolutions and/or the youth rebellion of the 1960s? What criticisms did films made in the Sixties make of American mainstream society, and vice versa? As young people sought to change American society, how did the content and themes of American film change as well?
Using Primary Sources: For each film, students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources related to the Sixties, including movie reviews of the films we will watch from the time period. These primary sources will provide supporting evidence for the writing assignment.

Writing Assignment: The Graduate: Students will write a brief 2-3 page response to the following prompt: How did "The Graduate" reflect the generation gap between the youth of the 1960s and their parents' generation. Does the film celebrate or criticize youth culture? Use specific evidence from the films, primary source readings and historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

Readings:
- Selections from Kennedy
- Mintz and Roberts, pp. 241-304, 284-297
- Lorence, Chapter 12
- Lewis, 289-290, 276-277

Primary Sources:
- An Account of the ‘Crime of the Century’”
- “The Producers are Warned of Possible Local Resistance to Alice’s Restaurant”
- Review in The New York Times
- Review in Newsweek
- Review in The Boston Globe
- Second Sight

Screenings:
- The Graduate (1967)
- Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961)
- The Monkees' Head (1968)

Clips:
- The TAMI Show (1964)
- Alice’s Restaurant (1967)
- Easy Rider (1969)

Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:
Unit 9: Cynicism in the “Me Decade”

This unit begins with an overview of 1970s political, social and economic changes and the impact the major issues of the decade had on American life. Controversies like the Vietnam War and Watergate scandal ushered in a period of unprecedented disillusionment and cynicism toward American political and military leadership and economic challenges deflated the optimism of previous decades. Although the environmental movement was gaining momentum, Americans generally abandoned political activism and, instead, turned toward self-improvement rather than social progress. Many films from the 1970s like Norma Rae, American Graffiti, Annie Hall and Rocky are critically acclaimed and are generally seen as more substantive, daring and artistic than the movies of earlier decades. What statements do these substantive movies make about the period in which they were produced and first seen?

As we screen these films in class, students will consider the following questions: What do the films we've watched reveal about American culture in the 1970s? In what ways are each of these movies a reflection of the values and priorities of the decade?

Using Primary Sources: For each film, students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources related to the Fifties, including movie reviews of the films we will watch from the time period. These primary sources will provide supporting evidence for the writing assignment.

Writing Assignment: A National Identity Crisis: Students will write a brief 2-3 page response to the following prompt: The decade of the 1970s is typically considered a low-point in the 20th century American history. The nation faced challenges in foreign policy, a sluggish economy and cultural and social apathy. In what ways do the movies we viewed reflect or address this national "malaise" (to borrow a phrase from President Carter)? Use specific evidence from the films, primary source readings and historic evidence from the period to support your answer.

Readings:

- Selections from Kennedy
- Mintz and Roberts, pp. 298-308
- Lorence, Chapters 13, 14
Screenings:

- American Graffiti (1973)
- Rocky! (1976)
- Annie Hall (1977)
- Norma Rae (1979)
- The Candidate (1972)

Clips:

- All the President’s Men (1976)
- Saturday Night Fever (1977)

Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:

___ HW 25: Read Chapter 18 and complete chapter assessment (p. 630)
___ Quiz 11: Covers Chapters 18
___ HW 26: Read Chapter 19 and complete chapter assessment (p. 664)
___ Test 11: Covers Chapters 18-19
___ HW 27: Read Chapter 20 and complete chapter assessment (p. 696)
___ Quiz 12: Covers Chapter 20

Unit 10: It’s Morning in America

This unit begins with a review of the significant social, political and economic changes in American history and a consideration of how those changes affected 1980s culture. Following the social upheaval of the 1960s and the disillusionment of the 1970s, many Americans longed for a return to a past when the U.S. an economic powerhouse and global leader. The 1980s saw a re-emergence of the priorities and values of the past, but at the same, the 80s were marked by widespread corporate and individual greed. The “hippies” became “yuppies” and materialism replaced idealism. Confronting the Soviet Union also reignited the fears held by earlier generations.

By the 1980s, Hollywood’s own desire for profits meant the blockbuster model perfected in the 1970s would insure studio profits throughout the next decade. Films like Back to the Future, Rocky IV and The Hunt for Red October were big money-makers for their respective studios, but they also represent the values and culture of the period in which they were made and first watched.
Students will work to answer several key questions in this unit: How did Hollywood these budget-busting films explore themes of greed, power and prestige on-screen? What else do these films represent about American culture and society? How were renewed Cold War concerns represented on the big screen?

Using Primary Sources: For each film, students will read and annotate a selection of primary sources related to the 1980s, including movie reviews of the films we will watch from the time period. These primary sources will provide supporting evidence for the writing assignment.

Writing Assignment: A National Identity Crisis: Students will write a brief 2-3 page response to the following prompt: Choose one film that we have screened in this unit and explore how this film represented on of the following aspects of Eighties life:

• the resurgence of Cold War fears
• widespread greed/rise of "yuppies"
• the re-emergence of American optimism

OR you may choose to explore another aspect of American society represented in one of the films we watched.

Readings:

• Selections from Kennedy

Screenings:

• *Tootsie* (1982)
• *War Games* (1983)
• *Rocky IV* (1985)
• *Back to the Future* (1985)
• *The Hunt for Red October* (1990)

Clips:

• *Mr. Mom* (1983)
• *The Breakfast Club* (1985)
• *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off* (1986)
• *Wall Street* (1987)
• *Working Girl* (1988)

Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:
HW 28: Read Chapter 21 and complete chapter assessment (p. 726)
Test 12: Covers Chapters 20-21
HW 29: Read Chapter 22 and complete chapter assessment (p. 764)
Quiz 13: Covers Chapter 22
HW 30: Read Chapter 23 and complete chapter assessment (p. 788)
Quiz 14: Covers Chapter 23
Oral Presentations: Most Important American Project
Test 13: Covers Chapters 22-23

Unit 11: Generations X & Y

In this last unit, students consider what major political, economic and social changes will come to define contemporary American. The turn of the last century has seen numerous changes for the United States, at home and abroad. Cold War containment and confrontation have been replaced by a War on Terror. Innovations in technology and entertainment have blurred the lines between reality and fiction, and the nation’s “collective consciousness” has fragmented. American society has become more diverse and tolerant. At the same time, the American Dream is being redefined: no longer is marriage, a house in the suburbs, a traditional college education and a white-collar job for life seem to be the ideal.

CULMINATING PROJECT

Using the skills and strategies we have practiced all year, students will complete a culminating project with several key components:

- First, students will determine what major historic/contemporary events of the 21st century have-or will have-a significant impact on our national identity.
- Next, students choose one movie to analyze in the context of the historic event they have chosen.
- Students will then find at least five primary sources that help support their claim that their chosen movie is an accurate representation of some aspect of the 21st century.
- Finally, students will write a 4-6 page essay that explores how the film they've chosen represents a key aspect of contemporary American life, using their understanding of American history and evidence from primary sources to support their claim.

Unit Assignment(s):

Example Assignments:
HW 33: Final Exam Study Guide Due
Semester Final Exam: Covers Chapters 11-25

Course Materials

Textbooks

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tr>
<td>Screening America: United States History Through Film since 1900</td>
<td>James J. Lorence, Longman</td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/product/Screening-America-United-States-History-Through-Film-Since-1900/9780321143167.page">http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educator/product/Screening-America-United-States-History-Through-Film-Since-1900/9780321143167.page</a></td>
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## Supplemental Materials

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<td>In support of our main texts, additional reading will be assigned from the following books about American history and film: Mark C. Carnes, ed., Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies and Steven Mintz and Randy W. Roberts, eds., Hollywood's America: U.S. History. Students will be provided with several articles from film weeklies and review publications, such as Film and History, and The New York Times. Additionally, scholarly articles concerning relevant films are also provided to students to deepen their understanding of the historical era depicted in each film. The online resources of LeHigh University are also of great use for student understanding: <a href="http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/reels/about">http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/reels/about</a>. Other useful movie and history websites include: Digital History Textbook: <a href="http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/">http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/</a> Internet Movie Database: <a href="http://www.us.imdb.com/">http://www.us.imdb.com/</a> Movie Review Query Engine: <a href="http://www.mrqe.com/">http://www.mrqe.com/</a> Ebert and Roeper at the Movies <a href="http://bventertainment.go.com/tv/buenavista/atm/">http://bventertainment.go.com/tv/buenavista/atm/</a> Film Site: <a href="http://www.filmsite.org/">http://www.filmsite.org/</a> American Film Institute: <a href="http://www.afi.com/">http://www.afi.com/</a> History Live! Film Education resources British Pathe National Archives OnFilm</td>
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