

# ***HISTORY IN FILM – SYLLABUS - Rowlett High School, 2018-2019***

**Teacher: Mrs. Tracey Osborn**

**Room: 2164**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Welcome to Mrs. Osborn's History in Film class. This course examines 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century American history, culture and society through film. The primary text for this course will be American films (in whole or part) such as *City Lights*, *I was a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, *It Happened One Night*, *Modern Times*, *Journey for Margaret*, *The Mortal Storm*, *Mrs. Miniver*, *Casablanca*, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, *Citizen Kane*, *The Searchers*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *War of the Worlds* (excerpts from 3 versions), *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *Dr. Strangelove*, *American Graffiti*, *Little Big Man*, *The Sting*, *Rocky*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Norma Rae*, *Tootsie*, *Live from Baghdad*, *Charlie Wilson's War*, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, *Argo*, & *The Imitation Game*. We will critically analyze how American cultural and social conflicts are portrayed and worked out in popular film. By watching, discussing, and writing about these films, we will examine how motion pictures create a window into modern American society.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVE:**

The larger goal of this course is to learn how to critically analyze and evaluate films as cultural texts. The primary form of cultural and historical analysis done in this class will involve writing critical film reviews. A good film review examines both how a film works and how and why it affects the viewer the way it does. We will learn how to use popular American films to understand competing perspectives on 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century American history, culture, and society. If you disagree with an argument or perspective, or find it biased or limited, then say so. If you find the reading difficult, confusing, or pointless, then say so. But, in each case, you must be prepared to support your argument and larger conclusions.

## **CLASS FORMAT/SCREENINGS:**

A major portion of this class involves watching and critically analyzing films. **All but 2 in-class films are rated G, PG, or PG-13, EXCEPT the HBO TV film, *Live from Baghdad*, which is rated TV-MA (for language).** Signing the syllabus is considered as permission for your student to screen these films in class. **During the 6<sup>th</sup> grading period, we will screen *Charlie Wilson's War* & *Argo*, which are rated R (for language). PLEASE SIGN THE ADDITIONAL PERMISSION SLIP ATTACHED TO THIS SYLLABUS.**

## **FILM REVIEWS:**

Students are required to write 2 major film reviews each grading period (total of 6 reviews) (1 ½ - 2 pages each) throughout the semester based on films viewed **OUTSIDE OF CLASS**. The films are selected from the Library of Congress's *American Film Institute's* list of Top 100 American Films. These reviews count as test grades. At the beginning of each grading period, students receive a list of films from which to choose. All the films for outside-class viewing during the first grading period are rated G (films released prior to 1960). The second grading period list (films released from 1960-2007) includes some "R" rated titles. If a student chooses an R-rated film, he/she **MUST HAVE A SIGNED PERMISSION SLIP ON FILE** (It does not matter if you are 18 years old). The 3<sup>rd</sup> grading period will involve writing reviews on films released since June 2017. In order to provide a model for writing these film reviews, portions of *Critical Approaches to Writing about Film* by John Moscovitz will be assigned. Film reviews will be graded on how well you critically analyze how a movie works and how it examines larger cultural and social issues in American history and society. **ALL REVIEWS WILL BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com).**

## **ABOUT THE TEACHER:**

I earned my Bachelor of Science degree (Cum Laude) in History from Texas A&M University-Commerce. My certifications include: Secondary History (grades 6-12), Secondary Composite Social Studies (grades 8-12), & Talented/Gifted. My late husband & I have a daughter who works as an engineer for Verizon Wireless and our son is a sociologist with Round Point Mortgage. I am also a violinist with the Mesquite Symphony Orchestra.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Students and parents are encouraged to contact me with any questions or concerns.

RHS phone number: 972-463-1712, ext. 81147

Email: [trosborn@garlandisd.net](mailto:trosborn@garlandisd.net)

RHS website: <http://www.garlandisdschools.net/rhs> (with link to SKYWARD Online Grade Book)

\*\*\* Class website: <http://www.teacheroz.com> (more info below) \*\*\*

\*\*\* Class Google Drive (all lecture notes & handouts for view/download): LINK ON CLASS WEBSITE, teacheroz.com.

**CONFERENCE PERIOD:** 9:05-10:45AM (2<sup>ND</sup> PERIOD, 2A & 6B)

## **GRADING PROCEDURES:**

Classwork – 60%

Quizzes/Tests/Major Film Reviews – 40%

**EACH** ‘grading period’ counts as 2/7 of trimester grade. Final Exam: 1/7 of trimester grade

**ABSENCES/MAKE-UP WORK/LATE WORK:** Late work is penalized a maximum of 30 points. **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THREE (3) DAYS. Major Film Reviews will not be accepted late.** Students with **excused** absences have one extra day for each day absent to make up work. **If absent (illness, ISS, or suspension), it is the STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY to inquire about make-up work and check the class calendar posted in the room. STUDENTS WHO ARE ASSIGNED TO ISS MUST PICK UP WORK BEFORE GOING TO ISS ROOM AND ARRANGE TO VIEW MISSED FILMS DURING TUTORIALS.**

**TUTORIALS:** **Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 6:45-7:15AM or 2:40-3:20PM**

Students must have a pass (or signed note from parent/guardian) to enter the building.

\*\*\* **I DO NOT NORMALLY ASSIGN MANDATORY TUTORIALS FOR MISSING WORK. IT IS THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO ATTEND TUTORIALS.** \*\*\*

## **REQUIRED SUPPLIES:**

- notebook paper      - pens (blue/black ink) & pencils      - Section of Binder dedicated to Film Class.

\*\*\* **ONLINE GRADEBOOK** \*\*\*: Parents and students can check progress, grades, & attendance in class 24 hours a day/7 days a week with Family/Student Access to **SKYWARD** software program. You can access the link to Skyward from the Film class, RHS, or GISD websites. Please be aware that I do use some special grade codes. A grade of “1” in the SKYWARD Online Grade Book means the time allotted to turn in an assignment has passed. A “2” means a student has plagiarized a source or copied/allowed someone else to copy his/her work.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY (cell phone & iPad):** Mrs. Osborn allows students to use electronic devices for classroom activities **ONLY**. Otherwise, the use of these devices in Mrs. Osborn’s classroom is **expressly forbidden**. On first observed use, a warning will be issued. At Mrs. Osborn’s discretion, subsequent use may result in an office referral AND/OR the loss of any earned final exam exemption. Signs with this policy are displayed in class. (*Students are issued a GISD iPad for their use*).

**CLASS WEBSITE (www.teacheroz.com):** An Internet website listing important announcements, each week’s schedule/assignments, and links to websites for research and information on Film History. \*\*\* **NOTE:** All assignments, information, and notes/outlines listed on the online website are also displayed in the classroom or given to the students. Students who do not have regular access to the Internet can access the sites in the Library before school, after school, and during their lunch period.

\*\*\* **Students** are required to keep this syllabus in the “Notes/Assignments” section of their binder for future reference. A copy of this syllabus (for home reference) is available for download on the class website at <http://www.teacheroz.com> \*\*\*



**STUDENT'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

***IN-CLASS SCREENINGS: CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR, ARGO, 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE***  
**(tentative), PERMISSION SLIP**

During the 6<sup>th</sup> grading period, Mrs. Osborn's History in Film class will screen the 2007 Oscar-nominated film *Charlie Wilson's War* to explore the history behind the war in Afghanistan and the 2012 Best Picture *Argo* and explore the history behind the 1979 Iranian Hostage Crisis. Tentatively (depending on release date), we will also screen the 2018 teen film *8<sup>th</sup> Grade*, a teen angst film about the role of social media in teenagers' lives today. These films received an R-rating by the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) for language only (+ some sexual references in *8<sup>th</sup> Grade*), ALL students must submit a signed permission slip prior to screening the film. Please, **SIGN** the appropriate line below and return this form to Mrs. Osborn.

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, my student **MAY** view *Charlie Wilson's War*, *Argo*, & *8<sup>th</sup> Grade* in class.

\_\_\_\_\_ **NO, I DO NOT** wish my student to view *Charlie Wilson's War*, *Argo*, & *8<sup>th</sup> Grade* in class.

***OUTSIDE CLASS FILM REVIEWS (#3, #4, #5, & #6) PERMISSION SLIP***

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grading periods, Mrs. Osborn's History in Film class will write Outside Class Film Reviews chosen from the American Film Institute's (AFI) list of Top 100 American Films. Some of the films are rated R (e.g. *The Godfather*, *Shawshank Redemption*, & *Saving Private Ryan*). ALL students who choose to review a R-rated film must submit a signed permission slip BEFORE I can accept their review for a grade. Please, **SIGN** the appropriate line below and return this form to Mrs. Osborn. OTHERWISE, STUDENTS WILL NEED TO SUBMIT A SEPARATE PERMISSION SLIP FOR EACH OF THE 4 REVIEWS IF ANY OF THEM ARE RATED R.

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, my student **MAY** review R-rated films from the AFI's Top 100 American Films list for the Outside-Class Film Reviews for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grading periods.

\_\_\_\_\_ **NO, I DO NOT** wish my student to review R-rated films from the AFI's Top 100 American Films list for the Outside-Class Film Reviews for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grading periods.

**REMIND TEXT APP (remind.com)** – This program allows me to send important reminder texts to students. I will NOT have your student's phone number and they will NOT have my phone number. All texts are archived, If YOU would like to also receive all texts sent to your student, please join using the correct class code and in the sign up process, please include the word 'parent' after your name (code handout/instructions given to your student). Please give permission below for your student to sign up for Remind Texts.

\_\_\_\_\_ **YES**, my student **MAY** sign up for Remind.com texts from Mrs. Osborn.

\_\_\_\_\_ **NO**, my student **MAY NOT** sign up for Remind.com texts from Mrs. Osborn.