

Film & Politics PIA 2290 & LIS 2970 Take Home Midterm Exam

Instructions: Select **only two** of the four questions below. Prepare a 5-page, double-spaced, scholarly response with appropriate citations for each of the two questions you select. All citations must be end notes and they do not count as part of the required 5-page essay. The exam should be turned in at the start of class **October 26, 2004**. Please turn in one document with a single staple top-left. The cover page should provide your name, class, date, email, and phone and this information should not appear anywhere else on the document.

Tips: Write long essays (seven or eight pages) and pare them back to no more than five as the due date nears. Use careful, serious, and organized prose with appropriate references to required and supplemental sources. Treat the films as texts, but be sure to avoid long indented quotations or narrative summaries from any text you reference. Instead, emphasize your own analytical assumptions and the criteria that you employ to make an argument, while situating yourself in the scholarly and political debates that shape this class.

1. What is the historiographer's dilemma when watching films like *JFK*, *The Birth of a Nation*, or *Wag the Dog*? How do these films impact our knowledge about American history and mythology?
2. Is it clear why President Harry Truman used atomic bombs on Japan? How does film impact our present day knowledge about this critical choice?
3. What is the "myth of American innocence" and how does it play out in film?
4. Describe the logic of nuclear arms testing, the diplomatic and other imperatives of atomic weapons buildups, and the effect of both upon American public opinion as demonstrated by film and the popular reactions to it.

Always cite your sources to avoid plagiarism. Any student guilty of plagiarism will receive the grade of "F" for the course. See <http://snipurl.com/9wen> for a description of Student Obligations and Adjudication for Alleged Violations at the University of Pittsburgh. See me if you have any questions about how to avoid the charge of plagiarism. Content, research, organization, grammar, and style are the basis for the grade (see the Term Paper Grading Rubric for more details on these categories).