

HST 202: History of United States W18 (Escobar Meta 30898 30897)

Home ► My courses ► HST 202 W18 (Escobar Meta 30898 30897) ► Week 6 ► Forum 2 ►
Hollywood History & Mythology

 Search forums

Forum 2

Hollywood History & Mythology

[• Subscribe](#)[◀ Interpreting Editorial Cartoons](#)[Hollywood History & Mythology ▶](#) Display replies in nested form Move this discussion to ... Move Pin

Hollywood History & Mythology

by Joe Escobar - Friday, January 26, 2018, 8:25 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Hollywood History & Mythology topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Hollywood History & Mythology

Sum of ratings: -

[Permalink](#) | [Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Fictions and Film

by Casandra Fountain - Monday, January 29, 2018, 5:03 PM

I personally find it sickening to think the media can put “historically based” or “based on true story” on movies and they have no historical truth behind them besides a name or the location it took place. You rely on your teachers and professors to teach you the right way and the truth behind historical matters. Yes, it will not always be right unless you were in that time period and witness it yourself but that’s why we have historians, archaeologists, and anthropologist. These people have dedicated their lives to the people who lived before us. I would much rather learn facts told from a historian then watch a movie “thinking” it has the facts right and trying to earn a buck or million.

I would be very concerned if I knew I was outright deceived or the truth was twisted in some way about historical fact. Say for example you learn something that you decide makes you want to go into a certain field of study and you pour your heart out and then discover along the way you realize that moment was fiction. In Eric Foner's review of the *Amistad* he states, "Most galling, however, is the assumption that a subject does not exist until it is discovered by Hollywood." (p.3) The producer of the movie had the audacity to say historians are suppressing the "real history" of African-Americans and slavery. Foner's reply was, "All American history textbooks today contain extensive treatments of slavery, almost always emphasizing the system's brutality and heroism of those who survived - the very things *Amistad*'s promoters claim have been suppressed." (p.4) As in our textbook and classroom lectures we have not shied away from the topic of slavery, and sugarcoating it isn't going to make the matter any less awkward or make us self conscience to talk about.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Hollywood History & Mythology

by Daryn Kleynehans - Monday, January 29, 2018, 9:59 PM

As a kid I was always told that movies aren't real but can be somewhat accurate at times. So whenever I watched movies I never took what they said as truth. When I hear about the falsehoods that are in these movies I am not surprised or disappointed, because I know this is just how Hollywood is. I am concerned when we find out that things that are taught to us are incorrect. I believe that if you want the truth you have to find it yourself, so it is always a good idea to check multiple sources about a topic. The fact that the History book was changed to fit the movie is disheartening. Either all these people are in cahoots with each other or they are told to change things by the government or something such as that.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Are they telling us the full truth?

by Rodrigo Santiago-Corona - Monday, January 29, 2018, 10:12 PM

All throughout elementary, and middle school I remember watching movies about history, and the way they shaped the way people thought about history. These movies contained a few visually compelling moments, as well as sugarcoating some of what truly happened. The Underground Railroad, was portrayed in American classrooms, and kids books, as Professor David Blight stated in his video, "What we tend to refer to the Under ground Railroad in American classrooms, as a closely network of farms and stations with station masters, and conductors who's job it was full time to help slaves escape." In fact the people who were working in the Underground railroad, to help slaves escape were mostly black not white. The film "La Amstad" took place in 1893, when American cruisers seized a cuban ship, with forty one slaves on board. Those forty one slaves aboard La Amistad, overpowered their captures, and killed the captain along with his crew. Hollywood didn't show what happened before they were brought on the ship, or what happened to those slaves aboard the ship. Personally I prefer to learn what actually happened in history rather than getting a gentle understanding of it.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



How I would personally and academically respond

by Jordan Lopez - Monday, January 29, 2018, 11:27 PM

As I have learned more and more about History in this class i usually have more questions then answers. When I first was learning about the history of our nation prior to college I was decieved to think that people like Abraham Lincoln and people of that nature were outstanding gentlemen. Most early Presidents and public figures were in fact slave owners or for slavery. I do think personally more accuracy needs to be taught in schools and movies shouldnt be included in course materials. Documentaries and books should definitely be more emphasised. After seeing the forum material I should defiantly question everything and see multiple sources from different viewpoints to get a better understanding of the truth. Just googled the underground railroad and it says it helped around 100,000 slaves. Seeing different statistics makes it hard to believe such number.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Doesn't shock me

by Alex McCall - Wednesday, January 31, 2018, 11:27 AM

Initially I was somewhat shocked to see that they exaggerated this story to the extent that they did. But the more I thought about it, the more I can see why they would want to exaggerate it. As Blight said the towns and cities in the North want to show that they helped slaves escape although they didn't. I feel like these communities are simply trying to make themselves look better. Which isn't that big of a deal, if anything it's a good thing because it shows the change in culture and that they're at least on the right side now. Plus, it is a good way to introduce such a harsh topic in school for children, as long as they know the truth somewhere down the line. As a kid, I certainly wouldn't want to know how terrible we treated slaves back then. It's too touchy of a subject for kids. There's obviously a LOT more that we're lied to about so this doesn't shock me at all.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Hollywood History and Amistad

by Kerianne Guza - Thursday, February 1, 2018, 3:58 PM

Directors should try to stay as close to the historical truth as possible when making a film. However, I believe it is okay to slightly exaggerated things in some cases in order to keep the viewers' interest. People have a way of just accepting what they see without question. This can be a problem when it comes to historical films, which often do contain inaccuracies. I have to say that I was disappointed by how the directors of Amistad responded to the language barrier between the audience and the African captives. I personally would have preferred that they use subtitles, for the sake of accuracy, but still agree with Foner on the fact that "It would have been far better to have the Africans speak English", "rather than rendering them virtually mute". Foner goes on to mention that "the main characters of Amistad are white", not black. I can't help but wonder if this was another way to avoid the language barrier and the use of subtitles.

In the end what really matters is the film's impact on the viewers. Were they just entertained or did they learn something in the process? And does this inspire them to research history further?

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Hollywood History and Amistad

by Jordan Lopez - Saturday, February 3, 2018, 11:22 PM

I do disagree with foner on the issue that they should of spoke english instead of being mute, the reason why I say this is because the culture and language of the African characters are so different from the U.S culture and we don't completely understand there mindset. They seem to have more of a obedience to leadership than what you would find in the U.S and I do feel like they trusted the leader of those people to speak on their behalf, they are also in a different country with a different language and many of those people are probably petrified of their previous voyage and experiences. Maybe they knew their voice had no power behind it and that there leaders voice was more effective when it came to speaking on their behave. I do agree that the main characters should have not only been white people. This I feel makes me think with out looking up any information on the movie that a black man wasnt the writer of the movie.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Movie Lover Heartbreak

by Camille Titus - Thursday, February 1, 2018, 11:33 PM

I love movies a lot, especially historical movies. Personally my love for movies sometimes gets in the way with how I feel about the academic part of films. I find myself catching things that aren't quite right and get a bit annoyed but then something cool happens and it's out of my mind. Afterward I will tell whoever I'm with and of course I have heard the "just a movie" phrase. I often find myself wondering why hollywood would make semi-truth movies instead of just making fiction or nonfiction. I believe it's because of multiple reasons. Money, ratings, reaching more people, and possibly thinking nobody will fully put their faith in "just a movie". Though that's just what happened with Amistad and the old version of our textbook! " Amistad presents a highly misleading account of the case's historical significance, in the process of sugarcoating the relationship between the American judiciary and slavery." (Foner link). The idea that hollywood could change a event from history anyway they see fit for entertainment purposes is ridiculous. I think that we shouldn't shy away from our history (the good or bad) because our history is what has made us as a country. Good and bad, it defined us because of how we evolved to get to where we are. So I believe we should at least acknowledge and know our truth, before we learn to take myths for facts.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: Movie Lover Heartbreak

by Daryn Kleynhans - Saturday, February 3, 2018, 11:40 PM

I completely agree with what you said about people saying its "just a move". I too hear people say that but even tho they say that its hard to really enjoy a movie if you think of it as, well, "just a movie". The best part of movies is imagining they are real and feeling like you're there. And Hollywood knows this and I believe they take advantage of this and use it to push their own agenda of how they want to portray history. On another note I agree that are history should not be filtered and should be shown to us with the raw facts.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



The Movies

by Alex McCall - Friday, February 2, 2018, 3:08 PM

For me, I find it frustrating when movies twist the past. Like Foner said a lot of the members of 'Amistad' were black and not white, this is a common thing that Hollywood lacks in accuracy. For example the movie "Gods of Egypt" starred white actors such as Gerard Butler, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Brenton Thwaites, and many more, when in fact there were no white people living in Egypt at the time. I feel like the directors just want to use common actors that people know so they will check out the movie. Same thing with changing the plot slightly, to make the story more interesting. However, I do see why the textbook changes what movies it references, because it wants to connect with the newer audience. But like Foner said if students want the real stories on slavery, check the libraries.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



The Affects of Hollywood Exaggerations

by Nicholas Stevens - Saturday, February 3, 2018, 9:51 PM

When seeing these exaggerations it makes me feel uneasy, and wonder what other information I have been given that could be false or exaggerated, will I ever learn which things I have been misinformed about? It also worries me, if I try to use this information I have learned and its wrong, that it could possibly affect my grades or future work. This is one of the reasons I have trouble watching historically "true" stories. I'm not a historian so when I watch one of those movies I am trusting them to tell me the truth and to correctly inform me of the events taking place. In this idea, I don't like that they mentioned a movie that is historically inaccurate, to describe what was happening in these events; this could lead someone to be very misinformed in the subject.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Entertainment vs Awareness

by Miriel Orhai - Saturday, February 3, 2018, 9:54 PM

Like editorial cartoons, Hollywood historical fiction and history-turned-myth like the Underground Railroad function to seize the attention of the public and make the subject at hand -- famously boring subjects, history and politics -- more interesting. But while editorial cartoons function as a statement about a current state of affairs, communicating an opinion or theory belonging to the author, Hollywood films often function differently. History is modified to

make the story more palatable. This generally means adding more action, an unnecessary romance, or, as Eric Foner accuses of *Armistad*, giving white characters the primary plotline even when the story revolves around black characters. These changes are designed to help the movie generate more revenue, not so much to make a statement about that piece of history.

As someone interested in the movie business, and as someone who sees a lot of value in movies, I can completely understand these non-historical changes. I love a good action or romance flick, and I understand that the Hollywood storytelling formats often don't match up perfectly with history on their own. I see the importance of using entertainment to make historical events seem more culturally relevant.

But as someone who doesn't want to be fed lies, of *course* I want historical films to be as historically accurate as possible. Not only is it personally important to me that I'm aware of history and well-informed, I think it's crucial that society as a whole is historically aware and not blindly accepting the falsehoods that many Hollywood historical fictions feed them. I deeply appreciate films that do the absolute most possible to be historically accurate and true to the time of the setting. We have plenty of full-fiction and fantastical stories to play with already. History is a different type of storytelling, and one that deserves to have its integrity protected.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Sugar coating slavery.

by Abigail Gierut - Saturday, February 3, 2018, 10:08 PM

My personal response to these exaggerations is actually disappointment. Growing up, I was mostly home schooled or I went to a private school and I was indeed taught many of these falsehoods as fact. Whenever the topic of slavery was brought up we did learn about the many hardships, struggles and just downright horrible things slaves had to endure at the time(although extremely sugar coated), but there was always much more emphasis the underground railroad and on the noble white abolitionists of this time that sacrificed so much to fight for the freedom of the these pour souls. Now, since I have continued my education in high school and now college I have been shown the harsh truth that is the history of our country and it is disappointing. Not only am I disappointed in the lies I was taught and the people who taught them to me, but in all honesty I am also disappointed that we are in fact NOT the heroes of this story. As ignorant as that may sound, we are all human and I believe it is in our nature to want to be right, we want to be the good guys in a story, no matter how distorted our view on what good and bad may be. This is the reason I believe many people use the very few examples of white abolitionists aiding black slaves in their escape to freedom and make it seem like it was much more common in those times, than the reality that the majority of people running the underground railroad were black themselves as Professor David Blight points out in the forum video "Most of the people who worked in the underground railroad were black, not white" (1:30, Blight). He also explains my theory of the motivation behind these exaggerations by saying that it's easier to focus on the heroism of our ancestors in the topic of slavery than to face on the scary truth of how bad it really was. "Why we need the mythology of the underground railroad. It's a passage into our understanding of slavery that is sometimes gentler, sometimes more savory than it is to look at slavery itself"(3:40, Blight video).

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

**Re: Sugar coating slavery. I agree.**

by Jordan Lopez - Saturday, February 3, 2018, 10:43 PM

I totally agree with the sugar coating statement. I remember in class we watched a video discussing the Mexican-American war and that's what Americans call it today. However, in Mexico they call it the American invasion showing more of a realistic viewpoint of the incident. It shows us that when it comes to explaining our history we tend to emphasize the good with the bad to balance out the evil. Learning in this history class and the history class I took last term I learned a lot. I learned the truth without the sugar coating. However, it is disappointing, I do understand the reason behind it. We all have told a cool story of our past and exaggerate or leave out any crucial factor that may make us look bad. I always believed schools should put the facts on the table and let us individually decide and this class is taught mainly in that fashion. Our teacher seems to bring us the facts and lets us decide our own perspective without trying to convince us of only what he believes in

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

◀ [Interpreting Editorial Cartoons](#)

[Hollywood History & Mythology](#) ▶

 [Moodle Docs for this page](#)

[Accessibility at Lane](#)

You are logged in as Joe Escobar ([Log out](#))

HST 202 W18 (Escobar Meta 30898 30897)