History of the 20th Century: 1951–2000
HIST E-108/W (Spring 2003)
Wednesdays 5:30–7:30 pm

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For discussion section days, times, and places of each TA, see page 7 of this syllabus

Course Goals:
To investigate ideas about the history of the 20th century while reading critically, thinking logically,
and questioning intelligently. To provide a method with which one might continue to study the
artifacts of the human past and to encourage that study. As the philosopher of science Sir Karl
Popper has written: “all teaching on the University level (and if possible below) should be training
and encouragement in critical thinking.” In this course every fact, assertion, and interpretation about
history is open to reconsideration. Merely accepting authority, invoking political considerations, or
agreeing with the instructor is neither necessary nor sufficient for determining one’s own views.
Such uncritical accepting, invoking, and agreeing are corrupting influences that tend to hinder the
development of independent thinking. Ideas and arguments in this class will be accepted or rejected
on the basis of three criteria: (1) logical coherence (i.e., no internal contradictions); (2)
correspondence to external source testimony (i.e., no suppressed evidence); and (3) conceptual
elegance (no unnecessary abstractions). For a fuller explanation, see the course handout “Three
Criteria of Historical Study.”

Undergraduate Student Grading and Deadlines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>draft</th>
<th>grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>10% First Written Assignment</td>
<td>Feb 12</td>
<td>Feb 26</td>
<td>Mar 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>10% Mid-Term Quiz</td>
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<td>Mar 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>25% Second Written Assignment</td>
<td>Mar 12</td>
<td>Apr 2</td>
<td>Apr 23</td>
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<td>25% Third Written Assignment</td>
<td>Apr 16</td>
<td>Apr 30</td>
<td>May 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>30% Final Examination</td>
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<td>May 21</td>
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</table>

In the written assignments you have a chance to demonstrate your conceptual thinking ability. The
questions for the written assignments are on this syllabus. Prepare and write the essays outside of
class and hand them in on the designated due dates. The first date is when you should hand in the
draft (for comments, no grade) of each assignment. The second date is when you should hand in the
revised version (for grade). The third date is the *terminus post quem non*, the date after which we will not accept any work on that assignment. The questions on the mid-term quiz and final exam will test your knowledge and thinking ability. Both tests will be given in the classroom. The mid-term quiz will take up the first half-hour of the class period on March 5. The rest of that class period will be a lecture. You will have two hours on May 21 for the final exam.

### Graduate Student Grading and Deadlines

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<tr>
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<td>Feb 12</td>
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<td>Proposal for Research Paper</td>
<td>Mar 12</td>
<td>Apr 2</td>
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<td>Apr 16</td>
<td>Apr 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>30% Final Examination</td>
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<td>May 21</td>
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The First Written Assignment is the same as for undergraduates and counts 10% of your final grade (see page 8 of this syllabus).

In the research paper you have a chance to demonstrate your conceptual thinking ability and develop your research skills. It will be up to you to develop your own research topic with the approval of the course assistant and instructor. First, consult with your course assistant and/or the instructor about focusing on a topic. Then follow the guidelines in *A Guide to the ALM Thesis*, 5th ed., pp. 10–41. Prepare and write the drafts of the proposal and research paper outside of class and hand them in on the designated due dates. No grade is given for the research paper proposal, but a research paper proposal must be approved before we will accept the research paper itself. The first date for graded written assignments is when you should hand in the draft (for comments, no grade) of each assignment. The second date is when you should hand in the revised version (for grade). The third date is the *terminus post quem non*, the date after which we will not accept any work on that assignment. Each research paper should be around 6500 words (approximately 25 pages) long, and you should use 12-point type.

The questions on the mid-term quiz and final exam will test your knowledge and thinking ability. Both tests will be given in the classroom. The mid-term quiz will take up the first half-hour of the class period on March 5. The rest of that class period will be a lecture. You will have two hours on May 21 for the final exam.

**Note on Use and Citation of Sources:**

The responsibility for learning the rules governing the proper use of sources lies with the individual student. In registering for a course, students agree to abide by the policies printed in the Extension School catalogue (pp. 188–189), which contains brief descriptions of plagiarism, cheating, and computer network abuse. Ignoring these policies may have unpleasant consequences. You will find an excellent introduction to proper citation in Gordon Harvey’s *Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), which is available at the Harvard Coop and online at <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~expos/sources>.
**Required Reading.** The following books are required. They should be available at the Harvard Coop:

  A year-by-year account

  Selections from primary sources

  Postulates that globalization has replaced the Cold War as international system

**Optional Reading.** For those of you who would like a standard textbook treatment, I recommend:

  Standard textbook treatment of the history of the 2nd half of the 20th century

**Additional Required Reading Options.** Choose two [2] of the following books. I did not order them through the Coop because they all are widely available trade books:

  Novel about events preceding Nigerian revolution of 1966

  Play about reconciliation and truth in post-Pinochet Chile

  First-hand account of the Cultural Revolution in China

  The war in Viet Nam from a Vietnamese woman’s point of view

  Critique of Post-Modernist cultural and social attitudes

  Novel about Czechoslovakia under communist rule
  Espionage during the Cold War

  Novel about Japan during the American occupation

  A critical and perceptive look at modern-day India.

  The fall of the Soviet Union in a historical context.

  An Egyptian view of the Middle East and the world by a major political figure.

  Scientific discovery in the mid-twentieth century

  A good introduction to the race problem in the U.S.

*Note:* Under “Lectures/Readings” on pages 5 through 7 of this syllabus, I have indicated by double underlining the recommended week for reading each of the additional-required-reading-option books.

**Especially Recommended for Graduate Students.** You should find the following book a particularly useful resource for your term paper:


* available at Harvard Coop textbooks department

* available for purchase at virtual bookstores (like Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, Borders.com, VarsityBooks.com, BookFinder.com, Bibiliofind.com, etc.), at physical bookstores (like the Harvard Coop book store, Wordsworth, Harvard Bookstore, etc.), or for borrowing at your local library.
Lectures:

A. Introduction to the Course

Jan. 29
1. Introduction: History as Investigation, or: “The Proper Occupation of the Historian”
2. The World at Mid-Century
   video: CNN, Cold War, “Korea”

B. The Super Powers and the Cold War

Feb. 5
1. The United States, 1951–1991
   Gilbert II: 854–927; Gilbert III: 5–54
   video: CNN, Cold War, “Make Love Not War: The Sixties”
   Sources 290–309, 397–400
   Autobiography of Malcolm X

Feb. 12
   video: CNN, Cold War, “Red Spring: The Sixties”
   Draft of First Essay Due

Feb. 19
3. The U.S. Excursion into “Star Trek”
   Diplomacy: Policymaking in the Rearview Mirror in China, Korea, and Southeast Asia
   video: CNN, Cold War, “Viet Nam”
   Sources 310–314, 324–326, 441–445
   Handout: Margaret Thatcher
   Unbearable Lightness

Feb. 26
4. The World’s Policeman: Crises in the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa
   video: CNN, Cold War, “Cuban Missile Crisis”
   Revision of First Essay Due for Grade
   Le Carre, Spy Who Came In

Mar. 5 (5:30–6:00) Mid-Term Quiz (30 minutes)

C. The Rest of the World

(6:00–7:25) 1. West European Reform and East European Revolutions
   video: WGBH and BBC, People’s Century, “People Power”
   Gilbert III: 292–372
   Sources 310–314, 324–326, 441–445
   Handout: Margaret Thatcher
   Unbearable Lightness
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<th>Date</th>
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<th>Authors/Sources</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>India: A Wounded Civilization</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Handout: Jomo Kenyatta Death and the Maiden</td>
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<td>Handout: TBA Death and the Maiden</td>
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<td>Sadat, In Search of Identity</td>
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<td>Handout: Mao Tse-Tung Son of the Revolution</td>
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<td>Michener, Sayonara</td>
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D. The World in Theory and Practice

Apr. 30
1. Intellectual and Cultural Developments
   Gilbert III: 814–894
   video: TBA
   Sources 426–440
   Third Essay for Grade Due
   On Looking into the Abyss

May 7
2. Technological and Scientific Developments
   Gilbert III: 895–932
   video: Bob Cringely, Triumph of the Nerds, vol. 2:
   “Riding the Bear”
   Handout: TBA
   Double Helix

May 14
3. The World in the 1990s: A Third Way?
   Handout: Mandela
   video: Bob Cringely, Triumph of the Nerds, vol. 3:
   “Great Artists Steal”
   Lexus and the Olive Tree
   Terminus post quem non for Third Essay

May 21
Final Examination

The final exam will be made up of 5 identification questions and one essay question. The essay question will be based on Thomas Friedman’s book The Lexus and the Olive Tree (see above, page 2, under “Required Reading”)

Discussion Sections

<table>
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<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Course Assistant</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>6:00–8:00</td>
<td>51 Brattle Street #721</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesdays</td>
<td>5:30–7:30</td>
<td>51 Brattle Street #701</td>
<td>Ashley Pollock</td>
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<td>Wednesdays</td>
<td>7:30–9:00</td>
<td>Loker Common (Memorial Hall)</td>
<td>Chuck Carroll</td>
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<td>Thursdays</td>
<td>5:30–7:30</td>
<td>51 Brattle Street #721</td>
<td>Gail Gardner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursdays</td>
<td>6:00–8:00</td>
<td>51 Brattle St., 7th-floor lounge</td>
<td>Leslie McGann</td>
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Essay Assignments
First Written Assignment: Presenting Evidence
(10% of Course Grade)

In class, you have been given a handout with five sets of readings on (1) Jomo Kenyatta, (2) Nelson Mandela, (3) Golda Meier, (4) Margaret Thatcher, and (5) Mao Tse-Tung. Read all five sets and then choose one to write about.

You are to write two-and-one-half (2½) pages (or about 625 words), which will contain a total of five (5) double-spaced paragraphs—which most likely will appear as two on the first page, two on the second, and one on the third. The first paragraph will be an introduction (which you may want to write last). This introductory paragraph provides some orientation to the reader for what follows and a statement of the main theme of your essay. The next three paragraphs are to be brief summaries of each major section within the set you have chosen. Thus, for the Jomo Kenyatta set of readings, you would write one paragraph summarizing the selection from the primary source, Kenyata’s *Suffering Without Bitterness*. You would write one paragraph summarizing the selection from Donald L. Barnett and Karari Njama And you would write one paragraph summarizing the selection from Jeremy Murray-Brown. The wording of your summaries should be as neutral as you can make it—no editorializing and no value judgments either explicit or implicit.

In your fifth paragraph, you will briefly recapitulate your main theme and point out evidence from the summary paragraphs that relate to this theme. Briefly give your own opinion about the set of readings you have just summarized. Ideally, whatever you mention in the fifth paragraph, you should have previously referred to in one of the first four paragraphs. Make sure there is some correlation between your first (introductory) paragraph, where you state the theme of your paper, and your fifth (concluding) paragraph, where you present your conclusions.

This exercise is meant to fulfill two purposes: (1) to allow you to demonstrate that you know the difference between straight presentation of evidence, on the one hand, and analysis and interpretation, on the other; and (2) to give you practice in succinct summarizing and characterization of what you have read.
Second Written Assignment: Formulating a Logical Argument
(25% of course grade)

Pick out something that interests you—a statement, argument, or interpretation in one of the books in “Additional Required Reading Options”—and analyze it, that is take it apart into its various components. In writing up your analysis, include a logical argument either opposing or favoring that something. A logical argument is a chain of reasoning, such that if the premises are accepted, then the conclusion must be accepted. An example of a chain of reasoning formulated in the early fifth century A.D. follows. It is from Augustine’s Confessions and is an argument against astrology:

I turned my attention to the case of twins, who are generally born within a short time of each other. Whatever significance in the natural order the astrologers may attribute to this interval of time, it is too short to be appreciated by human observation and no allowance can be made for it in the charts that an astrologer has to consult in order to cast a true horoscope. His predictions, then, will not be true, because he would have consulted the same charts for both Esau and Jacob and would have made the same predictions for each of them, whereas it is a fact that the same things did not happen to them both. Therefore, either he would have been wrong in his predictions or, if his forecast was correct, then he would not have predicted the same future for each. And yet he would have consulted the same chart in each case. This proves that if he had foretold the truth, then it would have been by luck, not by skill.

The outward signs of a logical argument can include “if ..., then ...” phrases, and words like “therefore” and “thus.” Sometimes these words and phrases are only implicit. In the passage above, Augustine uses two “if ..., then...” constructions and one “[t]herefore.” The point is that, unless the argument is a fallacious one and therefore not logical, the only way to avoid acceptance of the conclusion is to attack the premises or the evidence that argument relies on.

Present as fairly as you can whatever it is you are analyzing and whatever evidence or logical arguments would seem to support it. Then marshal your evidence and logical arguments for and/or against it. For example, you might analyze an assertion Chinua Achebe’s A Man of the People. You could point out evidence and argument that shows this assertion is a faulty one. Or you might argue that the assertion is a simplistic one that does not take into account the complexity of the issue. Or you might disagree with a particular statement in V. S. Naipaul’s India: A Wounded Civilization or something James Michener asserted in Sayonara. Or you may take issue with something in Anwar el-Sadat’s In Search of Identity: An Autobiography. In any event, we will judge your essay on the logic of the argument and your use of evidence, not on what you decide to analyze.

Your essay should be no longer than 1750 words (approximately seven [7] pages). This exercise is meant for you to develop and demonstrate your analytical skills. Follow the same procedure as you did in the first essay in terms of stating your main theme in the first paragraph, presenting your evidence and logical argument in the middle paragraphs and recapitulating your theme in the final paragraph. But do pick a topic different from that of your first essay. We will judge your essay on the basis of the criteria discussed in the “Course Goals” and in “Three Criteria of Historical Study.”
Third Written Assignment: Constructing an Interpretation
(25% of course grade)

By this point in the course, you will be familiar with a number of different interpretations of aspects of world history from 1951 to the present. And you will have had a chance to formulate your own ideas and interpretations. You may have realized that everything issues from some kind of interpretive framework. Your assignment is to identify an interpretation in one of the books you have chosen from “Additional Required Reading Options.” You might, for example, begin your essay by analyzing the point of view of Gertrude Himmelfarb’s *On Looking into the Abyss* or Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro’s *Son of the Revolution* or Milan Kundera’s *The Unbelievable Lightness of Being*. You could then present your own point of view on this aspect or aspects of world history. Try to tie your paper in with other readings in the course and the lectures, or even one or more of the films. An interpretation is an explanation of something. While it can involve use of, and be based on, logical argument, it goes beyond the argument itself to try to elucidate why something is the way it is. An interpretation in historical study can take the form of a narrative or of an analysis, but it should, in any case, fulfill the requirements of a hypothesis testable against the evidence with more research.

An example of an analytical interpretation follows. It is taken from Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada* (p. 397), in which Mattingly explains what is and what is not significant about the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 at the hands of the English:

Historians agree that the defeat of the Spanish Armada was a decisive battle, in fact one of the Decisive Battles of the World, but there is much less agreement as to what it decided. It certainly did not decide the issue of the war between England and Spain. Though no fleet opposed Drake, ... the war dragged itself out for nearly fourteen years more ... and ended in no better than a draw. Some historians say that the defeat of the Armada “marked the decline of the Spanish colonial empire and the rise of the British.” It is hard to see why they think so. By 1603, Spain had not lost to the English a single overseas outpost, while the English colonization of Virginia had been postponed for the duration. Nor did the Armada campaign “transfer the command of the sea from Spain to England.” English sea power in the Atlantic had usually been superior to the combined strengths of Castile and Portugal, and so it continued to be, but after 1588 the margin of superiority diminished. The defeat of the Armada was not so much the end as the beginning of the Spanish navy.

Mattingly characterizes his interpretation in the last line and presents this explanation as a way of understanding the evidence and the logical surmises we make from that evidence. The statement that the Armada’s defeat represented the beginning of the Spanish navy is also a hypothesis that can be tested against the evidence by doing further research.

Your essay should be no longer than 1750 words (approximately seven [7] pages). Not only should the essay be your own work, it should also show some originality. Merely repeating someone else’s interpretation does not fulfill the assignment. Follow the same procedure as you did in the first two essays in terms of stating your main theme in the first paragraph, presenting your evidence and logical argument in the middle paragraphs and recapitulating your theme in the final paragraph. But do pick a topic different from those of your first two essays. We will
judge your essay on the basis of the criteria discussed in the “Course Goals” and in “Three Criteria of Historical Study.”

Course Ground Rules

This syllabus is a statement of intent and not a legal contract. As such, I reserve the right to change or modify it, but changes or modifications will be done only with fair warning. At the Extension School, Harvard University standards apply across the board, including amount of work required and grading. There is no watering down or special allowance in this regard.

The course is writing intensive, which means you will have a chance to practice your writing skills and receive comments on your essays more than in the usual history course. It does not mean that we guarantee to make you a better writer, nor will you be evaluated on your writing skills, except insofar as lack of such skills negatively affects the articulation of your ideas. Becoming a better writer, like learning in general, is up to you. The world of learning is open to you and the process is never ending. One of the aims of this course is to provide you a means to continue studying history on your own after the course is over. We will do our best to assist you in the learning process, but in the end what you get out of the course is mainly up to you.

There are fifteen 2-hour classes in this course. Even if I wanted to I could not possibly cover all of 20th-century history during class time. What I can do is select certain topics and go into a little more depth than the readings provide. One of the aims of this course is to inspire you to investigate aspects of history on your own. I will try to provide to you some indication of what to look for and how to orient yourself when undertaking that further investigation. I firmly believe that every person benefits from learning to be their own historian. As a result, the human community benefits as well. For that to happen, however, you must not uncritically and unquestioningly adopt someone else’s interpretations, but instead you must think things through for yourself and come to your own conclusions. That is why I place so much emphasis on method, as opposed to so-called “facts.” Facts as such are not given but are frequently the result of some historian’s (biased) interpretation and (faulty) argument. It is up to you to spot the biases and fallacies and to ascertain the evidence for yourself. As A. W. Tozer wrote: “The best book is not the one that informs merely but the one that stirs the reader up to inform him [or her]self” (“Some Thoughts on Books and Reading,” p. 149).

Since the time is limited, I cannot engage in extended class discussions while giving the lecture. I do encourage you to ask questions in terms of points of clarification and contributing to general understanding. If you have a point or points of dispute with something in the lecture (that is, you understand what I am saying but you do not agree with it), I am more than willing to discuss the issues with you outside class, but class time is short and we should all try to use it efficiently.

Give us at least one week to grade each of your assignments. We would prefer that you not ask special favors in terms of getting your paper back in less time. You may, however, hand in your assignments earlier than the deadlines. We will mark the drafts with a ✓−, ✓, or ✓+. The ✓− means a total rewrite is necessary and you should talk with your teaching assistant about it. A ✓ means you are headed in the right direction but substantial changes are required. A ✓+ means your essay is almost there in terms of getting a good grade. It does not, however, guarantee an A on the next version. If you choose not to hand in a revised version after you have done the draft, we will count the assignment as incomplete and will enter the following equivalent grades for computation of your final course grade: ✓− = D; ✓ = C; ✓+ = B. Please consider this as an incentive to complete the assignments.

Finally, I urge you to be open to new ideas, tolerant of different viewpoints, and willing to try to understand that which may seem alien. Learning should be an enjoyable process, which is not to say that hard work is not involved. But that hard work can evoke a sense of satisfaction and achievement. The ultimate goal in this course is for you to come away with a sense of the joy of learning about what before was unknown and of understanding what before was puzzling. That is our common endeavor.
### Movie Schedule Fall 2002
#### History of the 20th Century
(All films shown at 7:45 p.m. in Science Center 110)

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 29</td>
<td><em>Pork Chop Hill</em> (1959)</td>
<td>Mid-20th Century</td>
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<td>February 19</td>
<td><em>Platoon</em> (1986)</td>
<td>Cold War in Asia</td>
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<td>February 26</td>
<td><em>The Spy Who Came In from the Cold</em> (1964)</td>
<td>Cold War Elsewhere</td>
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<td>March 5</td>
<td><em>Nasty Girl</em> (1990)</td>
<td>Europe</td>
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<td>March 12</td>
<td><em>The Beast [of War]</em> (1989)</td>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
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<td>April 2</td>
<td><em>Official Story</em> (1985)</td>
<td>Latin America</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 9</td>
<td><em>The Circle [Dayereh]</em> (2000)</td>
<td>Middle East</td>
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<td>April 16</td>
<td><em>The Blue Kite</em> (1994)</td>
<td>China</td>
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<td>April 23</td>
<td><em>Sayonara</em> (1957)</td>
<td>Japan</td>
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<td>April 30</td>
<td><em>Great Balls of Fire!</em> (1989)</td>
<td>Intellectual, Cultural</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td><em>Apollo XIII</em> (1995)</td>
<td>Technological, Scientific</td>
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</tbody>
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*All showings begin at 7:45 p.m. in Science Center 110. I selected films on the basis of three criteria: relevance for that week’s lecture; quality of treatment of the historical topic; and length of running time (the longest film is 2½ hours, but most are about 2 hours or less). Viewing the films is entirely optional, and you need not attend the showing after class. Almost all of these are available on video tapes of DVDs that can be rented or bought.*