

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF FILM STUDIES  
FILM 2194A-650 SPECIAL TOPICS IN FILM GENRE, SUMMER 2016  
CINEMAS OF DISASTER**

Dr. Barbara S. Bruce

Email: [bbruce2@uwo.ca](mailto:bbruce2@uwo.ca)

**Please read the following information completely and carefully:**

**WELCOME** to Special Topics in Genre: Cinemas of Disaster Online. This course was developed for Western's Film and Distance Studies by Dr. Barbara Bruce. The course provides an introduction to the study of genre, a survey of disaster films, and analyses of films from a number of different perspectives. The lectures are supplemented by secondary articles, which are posted in Owl. You are further encouraged to discuss course material with your classmates, through the Forum, and with your professor. As a result, you are in the advantageous position of studying a cross-section of a genre and a wide range of interpretations. You should come away from this course with an enriched understanding of how this popular genre developed and of the variety of disaster films and the critical responses to them.

Please do not hesitate to ask me questions or to let me know if you encounter any problems or see any errors in the course. I try to keep the course as up-to-date as possible, but sometimes a web link will no longer function if the URL has changed, an image in a lecture will disappear (often for some inexplicable reason), etc. This syllabus contains important information about the course requirements, expectations for the course, how to contact me, assignments and grade distributions, grading criteria, submission of assignments, plagiarism, Western's "Information for Students," and the reading and assignments schedule. You are responsible for all information documented in this syllabus.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS ONLINE COURSE**

Any online course demands as much time and effort from you as a conventional lecture-based university course in Film Studies, but this is a 12-week course condensed into 6 weeks, so it is particularly intense. You are required to participate in the course regularly, as you would in a classroom setting, which means watching the assigned films, reading the lectures and the assigned articles, and engaging with the material, the professor, and your classmates. As in any university course, then, you will have to devote several hours a week to each unit—and there are two units per week—in order to keep up with the reading and to complete the assignments. I recommend you schedule specific times for this course each week, just as if you were attending a regular class.

This course is designed for Owl, which operates as an "online classroom." Whether from home, from the computers provided by the university, or from the public library, but you must ensure that you have access to the internet on a regular and consistent basis. This means that, in the event of a service interruption to your internet connection at home, you are expected to find another way to access the course materials: for instance, by working at a computer lab on campus or in a public library.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will examine how disaster is conceptualized and narrativized in Hollywood and other cinemas in an attempt to address the following questions: What constitutes a "disaster movie"? How do we define "disaster"? Why do filmmakers make disaster films when they do? Why is this a Hollywood-dominated genre? How is disaster figured in relation to such issues as gender, sexuality, the Other, the family, ideology, the hegemony, technology, religion,

corporatization, and the environment? Drawing on cultural/historical and psychoanalytic theories, among others, this course offers an overview of cinemas of disaster from the early days of filmmaking to the present day. In particular, this course will focus on the Hollywood disaster cycles, but will also consider non-Hollywood approaches or responses to the genre, and will address theories of spectacle and the cinematic technologies that have defined and influenced the development of the genre.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Successful students who complete the course will be able to:

- offer an understanding of the importance of historical/national perspectives and how social norms and customs and the construction and consumption of films are products of time, events and context;
- explain how the dominant concerns/thematics in an historical period may be used to signify social status, subjectivity, cultural identity, gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, political power, and state nationalism;
- develop further their ability to analyze films critically and formulate and produce essays that have an effective thesis with a clear, well-articulated intent and a logical argument supported by adequate evidence from the film(s) under discussion;
- explain various theoretical and rhetorical approaches to cinema, with specific attention both to their concepts, their historical, cultural and intellectual contexts, and to their application to different films;
- develop research skills which will not only augment their knowledge of the field of study, but will also be able to incorporate the results of this research into their essays and other assignments;
  - o among the basic research skills are the ability to collect relevant bibliographic material on a prescribed topic (online and in the library), to engage critically with the scholarly literature with an assessment of the relative merits of an argument in essays and other written/oral assignments, and to articulate their own positions within a particular scholarly discussion;
- develop further their written/oral communication skills in the clear and organized presentation of an argument/hypothesis within the prescribed word limits of the research essays and other written assignments.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICY ON PREREQUISITES**

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees.

### **REQUIRED FILMS**

Each student is responsible for finding/acquiring the films assigned for this course. For suggestions on where to find the films, see "Finding the Films" on the Syllabus page on the course website in Owl.

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

The readings for each unit are posted in the unit's Course Content page in Owl.

### **Recommended Text**

Hayward, Susan. *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Routledge, 2006.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND GRADE STRUCTURE**

| ASSIGNMENT | DUE DATE | LENGTH | VALUE |
|------------|----------|--------|-------|
|------------|----------|--------|-------|

|                 |                |                |     |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----|
| Participation   | weekly         |                | 10% |
| Close Reading 1 | Sun., May 22   | 300-350 words  | 10% |
| Close Reading 2 | Sun., June 5   | 600-700 words  | 10% |
| Close Reading 3 | Sun., June 19* | 900-1050 words | 20% |
| Final Exam      | tba            | 3 hours        | 35% |

\*see the note on this assignment in the “Due Dates” section below

## COURSE INFORMATION

### COURSE CONTENT

To find the lectures for the course, click on the “Course Content” icon found on the Home Page. You’ll see twelve units. Click on the appropriate unit to find the lecture and discussion topics. Use the menu at the left of the page to navigate through the unit.

### PARTICIPATION

As in a classroom setting, students are required to engage in discussions of the films and of the assigned readings with your classmates via posts in the Forums page in Owl. This component of the course is worth 10% of the final grade. Achieving a high mark for this component is quite easy and can have a significant impact on your grade.

### Requirements

To receive full marks, you must post in the Forums page at least 20 scholarly discussions covering at least 10 of the 12 units of the course. That is, you must engage in discussions of at least 10 films on the course. A student will typically post 2 discussions for each of 10 films on the course. The 2 discussions should address different topics. You may certainly post more than 2 discussions per unit, but for any given unit, you cannot receive credit for more than 2 discussions and thus no more than 10 points (see the notes on grading, below).

Ideally, you should check for new discussions for each unit daily and follow the threads even if you have already submitted two posts. You should, of course, read the discussions that may result from your posts, and you may want to post additional comments or questions. As well, the professor or other students may have posted clarifications, explanations, etc. of which you should be aware.

Discussion topics or specific questions are included with each lecture and can also be found by clicking on “View Full Description” under the unit number in Forums. Each post will consist of your response to one of the given discussion topics/questions or to a discussion a classmate has already posted. Alternatively, you may raise a different issue or pose and respond to a question of your own, providing it addresses a scholarly issue. Each posting should be several sentences in length: in other words, it should be short- to medium-length paragraph.

### Discussion Due Dates

|               |                            |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| Units 1 and 2 | Sun., May 15 by 11:59 p.m. |
| Units 3 and 4 | Sun., May 22 by 11:59 p.m. |
| Units 5 and 6 | Sun., May 29 by 11:59 p.m. |
| Units 7 and 8 | Sun., June 4 by 11:59      |

|                 |                                |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
|                 | p.m.                           |
| Units 9 and 10  | Sun., June 12 by 11:59<br>p.m. |
| Units 11 and 12 | Sun., June 19 by 11:59<br>p.m. |

### **How to Post a Discussion**

Click on “Forums” in the left-hand menu on the course’s home page and then on the unit for which you want to post a discussion. Alternatively, in Course Content, choose the unit for which you want to post a discussion and then “Unit x Discussion.” Click on “Start a New Conversation” or click “Reply” to an already-existing post. Type or paste your discussion in the Message box that has opened, and when you have finished, click on “Post.”

### **Grading**

Since the discussions in Forums replace in-class discussions, they should be seriously considered and analytical. Each posting will be graded according to the rubric I have posted at the top of the Forums home page. Under “Film 2191A 650 Forum,” click on “View Full Description” to see the rubric.

Appropriately academic postings will receive full credit (again, read the grading rubric). Trite, irrelevant, or offensive postings will be discounted. Avoid stating merely whether you liked or disliked a film since this is irrelevant: your job is to be analytical.

At the stroke of midnight, the minute after the deadline for the unit’s posts, Owl will lock the unit’s forum and hide it from view. As soon as I can in the week after the deadline, I will review all the posts, assign marks accordingly, and post the marks in Gradebook in Owl. I will then restore the forum for viewing only.

Discussions will be graded using a point system. Each post is worth a maximum of 5, and so for two posts, a student will receive a maximum of 10 per unit. For full marks, a student will post two discussions per unit for ten units or post a total of twenty discussions spread out over the twelve lecture units. At the end of the course, I will post your total as a percentage.

For the most part, the Forum page is where you engage with your fellow students. I will interject, however, if a student has posted a problematic reading or an error, if I want to emphasize a particular point or issue that has been raised, or if a student seem to need or asks for some help to push his/her ideas further.

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

To find the topics for the writing assignments, click on the “Assignments” folder on the course home page in Owl. You will also submit your written assignment through the same folder.

#### **Close Analysis Assignments**

The Close Analysis assignments are designed to develop the student’s ability to analyze the specific details of a film and to show the relationship between form and content—that is, between the cinematic technique used by the filmmaker(s) and the ideas or themes conveyed by the film.

For Close Analysis 1, you will be assigned a specific element or motif in a film from the course to analyze. For Close Analysis 2, you will be assigned a specific scene or sequence from a film from the course to analyze. For Close Analysis 3, you will choose a disaster film not included on

the course from a list to be determined by the professor and then choose a motif, scene, or sequence from the film to analyze. The topics and choice of films for each reading will be posted well before the due dates.

This type of assignment differs somewhat from a conventional essay in that you do not have to develop a thesis in the way you would for a critical or theoretical essay. However, your analysis must still have a beginning, middle, and end. Begin with an introduction that includes a statement that focuses and summarizes the argument you will be presenting, an argument about the significance or meaning of the element, motif, sequence, or scene. The rest of the analysis should also be organized into paragraphs, each one focusing on a specific point and beginning with a topic sentence that highlights the main point of that paragraph. End your analysis with a succinct conclusion.

In your paper, you must analyze the *specific* details of the film. Vague and/or generalized discussions of the films, and especially mere plot summaries, will receive low grades. In developing your analysis, you should consider narrative details—setting, plot, characters, and symbols—as well as such cinematic details as sets, props, costume/make-up, lighting, and performance or figure behaviour, camera angles and distance, sound.

In the Assignment Information subpage under Course Content in Owl, I have provided a document with information that will help you to write these assignments. It includes a list of questions to help you develop your analysis.

Grading will also depend on organization and the quality of the writing. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of good writing skills. Students should make good use of a writing handbook, such as *Checkmate* or *The Little Brown Handbook*, and if necessary, the [Writing Support Centre](#). They offer drop-in and on-line services. If you have difficulties with the English language or if you have a learning, reading, or writing disability, please speak to me immediately and contact the Student Development Centre in UCC.

### Topics

For each essay, topics will be posted in the Assignments folder. Students may *not* develop their own topics.

### Formal features

The assignments must be written according to the standard **Modern Language Association (MLA)** essay style in typed, double-space, 12-point font, on white 8.5" paper with 1" margins. Note that in the MLA style, your name, the course number, your professor's name, and the date must appear double-spaced in the upper-left corner of the first page. The title should appear centred, one double-space below this information. Please consult *MLA Handbook* for the proper format. Please *do not* submit your assignments with title pages, which are not used in the MLA format.

### Citations

All bibliographic notation must use the MLA method of parenthetical notation and include a Works Cited page. For more information, consult the *MLA Handbook*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (some information on the MLA method can be found in the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#)).

### Assignment Length

Ensure you are within the assigned word limit. If your analysis is short or long, expand or edit your work carefully until you are within 10% of the word limit. If an analysis is short of or

exceeds the word limit by more than 10%, I will deduct marks at my discretion to a maximum of one full grade. In some cases, if an assignment exceeds the word limit by 50% or more, it will be returned unmarked to the student and late penalties will apply until an edited analysis is returned; if an analysis is short by 50% or more, it will receive a failing grade.

### **Due Dates**

The assignments must be posted no later than 11:59 p. m. Sunday of the week each is due. Assignments handed in late without prior permission will be returned with a grade only, no comments, and 3% per day late, including weekends (i.e., 6% for Saturday and Sunday), deducted from the grade assigned to your paper. Papers submitted after the assignment has been returned to the rest of the class will not normally be accepted.

I have given you past the last day of classes to submit the final assignment, Close Reading 3, but this means that I have very little time to mark and return the assignment. For this last assignment, then, I will only read it and assign it a mark. If you want full comments on this assignment, you must submit it one week earlier: by the end of the day on Sunday, June 12.

### **Submitting Your Assignments**

To submit an assignment, in Owl click on "Assignments" in the menu on the Home Page and then on the appropriate assignment folder. Assignments are submitted to and marked in Turnitin. Follow the instructions to upload your assignment, and make sure you receive confirmation that your submission has been uploaded. I recommend you print or screen capture your confirmation.

Paper copies or assignments emailed without permission will not be accepted, and late penalties will apply until the assignment is submitted in Owl. In case of a lost assignment, the student is always responsible; in other words, if a student claims an assignment has been lost, a replacement must be provided that same day, and late penalties will apply. See "Keep a Copy!", below.

### **Planning Your Term**

I recommend strongly that you *map out all your due dates and exam dates* at the beginning of the term and plan your research, writing, and study times accordingly. Saying that you have a busy week is not an acceptable reason for an extension, since you always have advanced notice of deadlines.

### **Extensions**

All requests for extensions must be made through Academic Counselling in your home faculty. The student must ask for it well in advance of the due date (preferably at least a week in advance) and have a good reason for the extension. Extensions do not apply to tests and exams.

If you miss an exam or an assignment due date, or if you require an extension at the last minute on medical or compassionate grounds, you must notify your professor *and* your academic counsellor *immediately*. Proper documentation (a doctor's note, for example) will be required and must be given to the academic counsellor (never to your professor) as soon as possible.

In all cases, if the academic counsellor believes the student has a valid need for an extension, the academic counsellor will then contact your professor. Only once the professor has

been contacted by your academic counsellor will s/he grant the extension or schedule a make-up exam and inform your TA.

### **Keep a copy!**

Always keep a paper copy of each of your papers and save electronic copies of each file on your computer *and* on an external hard drive, a USB key, or a cloud. Retain all assignments at least until you receive your official final grade for the course from the Registrar's Office. If you plan to go on to grad school, keep everything!

### **Grading**

All papers are rigorously marked according to the Grading Rubric, which gives the criteria for each grade level and which is posted in Owl, under Course Content/Additional Assignment Information.

**Returning Assignments:** I will do my very best to return assignments as soon as possible after the due date but certainly well before the next assignment is due. If you wish to discuss the comments or grade you have received with me, ***you must wait for at least three days after the assignment has been returned to you***—no exceptions.

If you believe an assignment has been unfairly graded for whatever reason and you to launch an appeal, you must follow the procedures prescribed by the university. See the "[Student Academic Appeals—Undergraduate](#)" document posted on the University Secretariat's "[Rights and Responsibilities](#)" webpage and in the Academic Calendar.

In brief, though, you must first consult with the person who marked your paper. If a TA marked your paper and you are still not satisfied after s/he has reexamined the assignment, you must then consult with the professor. The professor will consult with the TA, to ensure the proper procedures have been followed, and if they have, the professor will then review the assignment and contact you with a decision. If you are still not satisfied after the professor reexamined the assignment, you must make a request for academic relief in writing to the Chair of the Film Studies department.

### **Final Exam**

The exam will be three hours long and comprise three parts: PART A - six out of ten short answers: 30%; PART B - three out of five paragraph answers: 30%; PART C - one essay discussing two films from the course: 40%. Students may not write on any film or issue/topic more than once in Parts B and C.

### **Final Grades**

All assignments worth over 5% of your final grade, including the final exam, *must* be completed; failure to do so will lead to an automatic F for the course. Your final grades are released by the Registrar's Office, not your professor.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University Senate's Preamble to its "Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students" document reads as follows: "Members of the University Community accept a commitment to maintain and uphold the purposes of the University and, in particular, its standards of scholarship. It follows, therefore, that acts of a nature which prejudice the academic standards of the University are offences subject to discipline. Any form of academic dishonesty that undermines the evaluation process, also undermines the integrity of the University's degrees.

The University will take all appropriate measures to promote academic integrity and deal appropriately with scholastic offences.”

The Senate adds, “Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence.” This information is posted on the University Secretariat’s “[Rights and Responsibilities](#)” webpage in the PDF “Undergraduate Students – Scholastic Discipline.” The Senate continues, “Plagiarism and other scholastic offences will be prosecuted to the fullest extent that university regulations allow. In its academic calendars, Western University defines plagiarism as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing *another’s words or ideas* and attributing them as one’s own” (emphasis added).

Western University subscribes to **Turnitin**, a plagiarism-prevention service, and the Senate states, “All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).”

All assignments in this course will be submitted through Owl and checked by and marked it Turnitin. This service is *not* used on the assumption that the majority of students plagiarize, rather to deter a small minority of students who may be tempted to plagiarize and to protect all students from academic theft. As well, we do not rely solely on Turnitin: other measures are in place to ensure students hand in their own, original work.

Further, the Senate notes that “Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.”

If you are not sure what plagiarism is or what constitutes an academic offence, *ask!* The university assumes that all students have read “[Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students](#)” and are thus knowledgeable about academic integrity. Remember, ignorance is no excuse.

## **TALKING TO YOUR PROFESSOR**

Because online students work at different times and because I don’t live in London, no office hours are scheduled for this course. Instead, students who wish to talk to me may do so by email.

### **Email**

I am happy to communicate with students via e-mail, but I can’t always answer emails instantly; please allow 48 hours for a response, and remember that I may not (but often do) check email after the end of workdays or on weekends (therefore, emails received Friday to Sunday will be answered no later than Tuesday).

### **Telephone**

Students wanting to engage in an extended conversation about the course work—discussions or questions about the films and lecture material, assigned readings, close readings, the exam, or course expectations or results, etc.—should contact me by email to set up a time when we

will talk by phone. We will establish a convenient time for both of us, you will provide me with your phone number, and I will call you at the agreed-upon time.

I sincerely encourage you to make use of me, your professor. Do not hesitate to contact me to talk or ask questions about any topic or issue, including assignments, difficulties you are having with the course, suggestions for further reading, or clarification and expansion of issues raised in class. Unfortunately, most students wait until the last minute or until all hell is breaking loose before consulting their instructors. Please see me well ahead of deadlines and the onset of nervous breakdowns.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, medical issues, or religious obligations. Contact the appropriate person (myself, an academic counsellor, a staff member in Student Services, etc.) as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Medical Illness: Please go to the website for information on the university [Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness](#). *Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.*

If you require accommodation for religious observance, see the [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) page posted on the University Secretariat's "[Rights and Responsibilities](#)" webpage and in the Academic Calendar.

Students with disabilities should contact the [Student Development Centre](#) to obtain assistance and/or letters of accommodation.

Learning Skills: go to [SDC's Learning Skills Services](#), Rm 4100 WSS. From the SDC: "LS counsellors are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre and year-round through individual counselling."

Complaints: If students have a complaint concerning a course in which they are enrolled, they must first discuss the matter with the instructor of the course. If students are still not satisfied, they should then take the complaint to the Film Studies Office, International and Graduate Affairs Building, Room 0N64.

These regulations are in place because a failure to follow these procedures creates the potential for injustices of various kinds affecting either the instructor or the students themselves, or both parties. Concerns should not be allowed to fester but should be raised with the instructor in a timely manner, so that they can be addressed in time to make a difference to the course.

If you are having difficulties coping with the pressures of academic life or life in general, please seek assistance immediately from an academic counsellor in your home faculty and/or from someone in [Psychological Services](#) or [Student Health Services](#). Never hesitate to seek assistance for any problem you may be having. Consult the [Current Students](#) page on Western's website to apprise yourself of all the assistance available to students.

For further information, including the regulations governing Term Work, Exams, Faculty Office Hours, Academic Relief (appeals, petitions, complaints), and other matters, please see the [Academic Policies](#) page in the University Secretariat's website and the [Student Services](#) pages

in the Academic Calendar and the Western Student Guide, SAO Handbook, and other publications posted on the [Academic Calendars](#) webpage.

---

## COURSE SCHEDULE

NB: the screening and reading list is subject to change.

Legend for film technical specifications: m = minutes; c = colour; b/w = black & white; sil = silent

### Week – Dates

#### Units – Topics, Films, Readings, Assignments

### Week 1 – May 9 to 13

#### Unit 1 – Introduction and The Classic Hollywood Disaster Film

Required Film:

*The Hurricane* (Ford, USA, 1937, 110m, b/w, 1.37:1)

Required Reading:

Fitzsimmons, Lorna. "Contra Colonialism: Turning the Edge in Ford's *The Hurricane*"

Yacowar, Maurice. "The Bug in the Rug: Notes on the Disaster Genre"

#### Unit 2 – Disaster and *Film Noir*

Required Film:

*Panic in the Streets* (Kazan, USA, 1950, 96m, b/w, 1.37:1)

Required Reading:

Schrader, Paul. "Notes on *Film Noir*"

Telotte, J. P. "The Evolving Truth of the Documentary *Noir*"

### Week 2 – May 16 to 20

#### Unit 3 – The Creature Feature

Required Film:

*Gojira* (Honda, Japan, 1954, 98m, b/w, 1.37:1)

Required Reading:

Sontag, Susan. "The Imagination of Disaster"

Noriega, Chon. "Godzilla and the Japanese Nightmare: When *Them!* is U.S."

#### Unit 4 – The Historical Disaster Film

Required Film:

*A Night to Remember* (Baker, UK, 1958, 123m, b/w, 1.66:1)

Required Reading:

Howells, Richard. "Atlantic Crossings: Nation, Class and Identity in *Titanic* (1953) and *A Night to Remember* (1958)"

**Close Reading 1 due Sunday, May 22 by 11:59 p.m.** Note! the assignment is due the Sunday of the Victoria Day weekend. If you have plans for the long weekend, then be prepared to submit your paper *before* you head into the Canadian wilderness or *before* you are descended upon by friends or relatives, etc.

### Week 3 – May 24 to 27 (Monday, May 23 – Happy Victoria Day!)

**Unit 5 – The Sci-Fi Disaster Film in the Cold War Era**

Required Film:

*The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (Guest, UK, 1961, 98m, b/w, 2.35:1)

Required Reading:

Hunter, I. Q. "The Day the Earth Caught Fire" (CP). (Note: Spoiler Alert! Because this article discusses the ending of the film, I recommend you read it *after* you've watched the film.)

**Unit 6 – The Cold War Disaster Drama**

Required Film:

*Fail-Safe* (Lumet, USA, 1964, 112m, b/w, 1.85:1)

Required Reading:

Hendershot, Cyndy. "The Bear and the Dragon: Representations of Communism in Early Sixties American Culture" (Note: Spoiler Alert! Because this article discusses the ending of the film, I recommend you read it *after* you've watched the film.)

**Week 4 – May 30 to June 3****Unit 7 – The Disaster Movie in the 1970s**

Required Film:

*The Poseidon Adventure* (Neame, USA, 1972, 117m, c, 2.20:1)

Required Reading:

Roddick, Nick. "Only the Stars Survive: Disaster Movies in the Seventies"

**Unit 8 – The Disaster Film Parody**

Required Films:

*Zero Hour!* (Bartlett, USA, 1957, 81m, b/w)

*Airplane!* (Abrahams and Zucker, USA, 1980, 88m, 1.85:1)

Required Reading:

Matthews, Nicole. "Is Parody Political?"

**Close Reading 2 due Sunday, June 5 by 11:59 p.m.**

**Week 5 – June 6 to 10****Unit 9 – The Disaster Cycle in the 1990s**

Required Film:

*Volcano* (Jackson, USA, 1997, 104m, c, 1.85:1)

Required Reading:

Kakoudaki, Despina. "Spectacles of History: Race Relations, Melodrama, and the Science Fiction/Disaster Film." *Camera Obscura* 17.2 (2002): 109-53.

**Unit 10 – The Un-Disaster Film**

Required Film:

*Last Night* (McKellar, Canada, 1998, 95m, c, )

Required Reading: tba

**Week 6 – June 13 to 17****Unit 11 – Global Warning**

Required Film:

*The Day After Tomorrow* (Emmerich, USA, 2004, 124m, c, 2.35:1)

Required Reading: tba

### **Unit 12 – The Modern Disaster Drama**

Required Film:

*The Impossible* (Bayona, Spain/USA, 2012, 114m, c, 2.35:1)

**Close Reading 3 due Sunday, June 19 by 11:59 p.m.**

**Enjoy the course, and best of luck with your studies.**