Politics and Media: Political Theories and Institutions through Cinematic Eyes

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Goals:
Political institutions and processes shape and affect policy outcomes in democratic countries. In this class we will examine how central political institutions and theories are reflected in movies. The central goal of the course is to examine and discuss central theories in political science and learn about political institutions. To this end we will analyze movies and discuss to what extent they reflect the theories and institutions examined. The following topics will be discussed (among other topics): elections, voters and candidates, lobbyism and corruption, the rally around the flag theory, female suffrage and women rights, the median voter theorem and the calculus of voting paradox, terrorism and revolutions, them and us in politics and more.

Requirements:
1. Participation 20%:
   1. Students are required to be present in all classes— I will take names.
   2. Students are required to read regularly prior to each class and to watch the weekly movie prior to each class.
   3. Students are required to actively participate in class discussion (30%).
2. Presentation (2*10%): each student will present twice during the semester:
   1. 10-15 minutes presentation of the weekly readings- giving a short overview of the main concepts/theories/phenomenon based on the readings.
   2. 10 minutes presentation to start a debate about the theory/topic/concept

Note that the two presentations cannot be for the same class.
3. Discussion questions (20%): each student should send till midnight the day before class a discussion question based on the reading material and the movie we watched for the class. We will use these as starting points for our in class discussions.

4. Final paper (40%): each student will chose a movie and analyze its political theme. You will need to:
   1. Summarize the movie in up to 1.5 pages
   2. Present the major political theory/institution the movie presents and discuss it using relevant academic literature.
   3. Analyze the movie using the academic literature review presented in section 2.

**Option A:** regular paper. Submission Date: 30/7/15 (last day in class). Length: Maximum 10 pages.

**Option B:** seminar paper. Submission Date: 1/11/15. Length: maximum 20 pages.

In option A you focus on one topic/subject/theory and in option B you present two topics.

I reserve myself the right to decrease the reading load as I see fit.
Class 1: (24/6): Introduction: politics and movies

Class 2 (26/6): Female suffrage and women rights

movie: Iron Jawed Angels


Ms. Madeline Vinton Dahlgren. 1871. Thoughts on Female Suffrage and in Vindication of Women's True Rights.

Class 3 (1/7): Elections and Candidates

movie: The Candidate


Class 4 (3/7): Median Voter Theorem; Calculus of Voting Paradox

movie: Swing Voter


Class 5 (8/7): Lobbyism and Corruption

Movie: Bag Man


Class 6 (10/7): Nomination Processes

Movie: Advise and Consent


Class 7 (15/7): Rally Around the Flag/ Media Spins.

Movie: Wag the Dog


**Class 8 (17/7): The U.S involvement in Coups**

**Movie:** Missing


**Class 9 (22/7): Genocide, Crime against Humanity and the World Reaction**

**Movie:** Hotel Rwanda

Alain Destexhe, Alain. 1994. " The Third Genocide", *Foreign Policy* 97, pp. 3-17


**Class 10 (24/7): Terrorism and Intelligence**

**Movie:** The Little Drummer Girl


Class 11 (29/7): Multiculturalism, "them" and "us" in Politics/ Conservatism

Movie: Pleasantville


Iain McLean and Alistair McMillan, "Conservatism", The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics (3 ed.)

Class 12 (31/7): Privatization of Social Services: The Good, the Bad and the Evil

Movie: Sicko