This seminar uses the lens of moviegoing to explore cities, media infrastructures and leisure around the world. Taking moviegoing as our guide, we explore how race, class, gender and sexualities impacted access not just to cinematic leisure, but to cities. Central questions that will guide our readings and discussions include: How has urbanization differentially impacted access to media forms and public leisure? What are the key similarities and critical differences that have shaped global consumption of cinematic leisure and film? In what ways has moviegoing fostered perceptions of urban belonging and community formation? How does looking at moviegoing practices complicate dominant narratives of national belonging? While looking at movies, what can we learn about capitalism, colonialism and globalization? How have approaches to film studies and cinema changed over time? What is gained and lost by emphasizing spectatorship, reception or audience in media consumption? How does switching the angle and centering the US/Hollywood transform our image of America’s place in the world?

A second, but no less important aim of the course is to critically reflect on the ways in which historical methods and theoretical tools impact our understandings of the past. Texts have been chosen not only because they offer great insights into the diverse practices of moviegoing across space and time, but because they utilize a variety of methods, theories and sources to uncover the past. The hope is that even those utterly uninterested in film or moviegoing will come away from this course with a keener appreciation for the strengths and limits of various methods, and perhaps new insights into possible ways to explore a variety of historical topics.

**Required Texts:**


**Course Requirements:** Course enrollment demands insightful and constructive engagement with weekly readings and thoughtful and respectful collaboration with others.

**Weekly Reading, Writing and Discussion:** Students are required to write a short 500 word (2 page, double-spaced ‘book review’ of each weeks’ book. The aim is to familiarize you with the format for writing reviews, as well as to get you in the habit of taking concise notes on your readings for future reference. 20%

Each participant should also come to class with a written statement of 2 questions or points of discussion. These will serve to prepare each member to augment the points and issues raised by assigned facilitators. Participants are also encouraged to actively engage group discussion. 30%

Each student is required to lead discussion of the assigned material twice during the term. 10%
Grades will be determined as follows:
Weekly book review: 20%
Participation and leading discussion: 30%
Synthesis paper: 30%
Gone paper/presentation: 20%

Writing Assignments:

Students are required to submit 2 short papers at the end of the term. One paper (8-10 pages) should reflect on themes and issues raised in course materials. You may choose from one of the 2 following options: 30%.

First Paper

Option 1: Analyze and comment on methods and sources. This paper need not be an exhaustive review of each and every type of source used, but more of a thoughtful reflection on handful of broad approaches seen in the course readings and how each method/source served to shape our understanding of and the author’s presentation of the past.

Option 2: Tie the texts together across a broad theme. What have these texts taught us about broad patterns of urban life, cinematic leisure or media infrastructures? What does a comparative analysis demonstrate about the power/limits of film and other media? What is the social significance of collective leisure and entertainment? Any theme is possible, but should be cleared with me by week 8.

Second Paper/Presentation 20%

Collectively we will analyze reactions to/critiques of/reception of Gone with the Wind. Beginning with the article Schuessler, Jennifer. "Giving More Than a Damn." New York Times, 15 June 2020, p. C1(L) we will approach the film, its impact and audiences from a variety of angles. Each participant is required to conduct 2 types of research on the film and its spectators/reception. Approximately 5 hours of research should be done using historical sources—Newspapers, Popular Magazines, Reviews, Film Journals from the 1930s and 1940s. These can focus on the USA or any region of the world you choose. Our aim is to immerse ourselves in primary sources from the period and collectively assess how this one film was viewed at the time. You might be surprised. Another 3 hours of research should be done into the recent uproar over the film in light of Black Lives Matter/Confederate Statues or contemporary scholarly literature on Gone.

Students should analyze the material and write a 7-10 page paper discussing their findings. In addition, a 15 minute presentation of findings will be presented to the class as part of a collective, mini-conference. You can choose to focus your presentation on all or part of your research and analysis. This mini-conference will take place sometime finals week.

Week I: Introductions/Course Requirements and Central themes.


