

# Portraits of America

## DEMOCRACY ON FILM

### CURRICULUM OUTLINE

#### Module 1: The Immigrant Experience

- Introductory Lesson: *The Immigrant* (1917, d. Charlie Chaplin)
- Chapter 1: *America, America* (1963, d. Elia Kazan)
- Chapter 2: *The Godfather, Part II* (1974, d. Francis Ford Coppola)
- Chapter 3: *El Norte* (1983, d. Gregory Nava)
- Chapter 4: *The Namesake* (2006, d. Mira Nair)
- Chapter 5: The Backlash Against Immigration, featuring scenes from *Gangs of New York* (2002, d. Martin Scorsese) and *Hester Street* (1975, d. Joan Micklin Silver)

#### Module 2: The American Laborer

- Introductory Lesson: The Social Drama – *Children Who Labor* (1912)
- Chapter 1: The Historical Drama – *Matewan* (1987, d. John Sayles)
- Chapter 2: *Harlan County U.S.A.* (1976, d. Barbara Kopple)
- Chapter 3: *At the River I Stand* (1993, dirs. David Appleby, Allison Graham and Steven Ross)
- Chapter 4: *Salt of the Earth* (1954, d. Herbert J. Biberman)
- Chapter 5: *Norma Rae* (1979, d. Martin Ritt)
- Chapter 6: *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940, d. John Ford)

#### Module 3: Civil Rights

- Introductory Lesson: “The Other America” – archival footage of Dr. Martin Luther King
- Chapter 1: Empathy, Movies, and the Common Good, featuring scenes from *The Iron Giant* (1999, d. Brad Bird) and *Lincoln* (2012, d. Steven Spielberg)
- Chapter 2: *King: A Filmed Record...Montgomery to Memphis* (1970, conceived and created by Ely Landau; guest appearances filmed by Sidney Lumet and Joseph L. Mankiewicz)
- Chapter 3: *Intruder in the Dust* (1949, d. Clarence Brown)
- Chapter 4: *The Times of Harvey Milk* (1984, d. Robert Epstein)
- Chapter 5: *Smoke Signals* (1998, d. Chris Eyre)

#### Module 4: The American Woman

- Introductory Lesson: Ways of Seeing Women – *Possessed* (1931, d. Clarence Brown)
- Chapter 1: Through a Woman’s Lens: Directors Lois Weber (focusing on *Suspense*, 1913 and *Where Are My Children?*, 1916), Dorothy Arzner (*Dance, Girl, Dance*, 1940), and Ida Lupino (*The Hitch-Hiker*, 1953)
- Chapter 2: *Imitation of Life* (1934, d. John M. Stahl)
- Chapter 3: *Woman of the Year* (1942, d. George Stevens)
- Chapter 4: *Alien* (1979, d. Ridley Scott)
- Chapter 5: *The Age of Innocence* (1993, d. Martin Scorsese)

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### CURRICULUM OUTLINE (continued)

#### Module 5: Politicians and Demagogues

- Introductory Lesson: We, the People – *All the King's Men* (1949, d. Robert Rossen)  
Chapter 1: *Gabriel Over the White House* (1933, d. Gregory La Cava)  
Chapter 2: *A Face in the Crowd* (1957, d. Elia Kazan)  
Chapter 3: *Advise & Consent* (1962, d. Otto Preminger)  
Chapter 4: *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939, d. John Ford)  
Chapter 5: *Primary* (1960, d. Robert Drew)

#### Module 6: The Press

- Introductory Lesson: “Stop the Presses” – *The Power of the Press* (1928, d. Frank Capra)  
Chapter 1: *Meet John Doe* (1941, d. Frank Capra)  
Chapter 2: *Ace in the Hole* (1951, d. Billy Wilder)  
Chapter 3: *Good Night, and Good Luck* (2005, d. George Clooney)  
Chapter 4: *All the President's Men* (1976, d. Alan J. Pakula)  
Chapter 5: *Citizen Kane* (1941, d. Orson Welles)

#### Module 7: Soldiers and Patriots

- Introductory Lesson: What is a Patriot? – featuring scenes from  
*Drums Along the Mohawk* (1939, d. John Ford),  
*The Red Badge of Courage* (1951, d. John Huston),  
*Hacksaw Ridge* (2016, d. Mel Gibson) and  
*Born on the Fourth of July* (1989, d. Oliver Stone)
- Chapter 1: The First World War – featuring scenes from *The Big Parade* (1925, d. King Vidor)  
and *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930, d. Lewis Milestone)  
Chapter 2: *Sergeant York* (1941, d. Howard Hawks)  
Chapter 3: WWII: Mobilizing the Movies – featuring *The Memphis Belle* (1944, d. William Wyler),  
*Der Fuehrer's Face* (1943, dirs. Jack Kinney and Ben Sharpsteen),  
and two *Private Snafu* cartoons (1943, d. Chuck Jones)  
Chapter 4: The World War II Combat Film – featuring selected scenes from *Bataan* (1943, d. Tay Garnett)  
and *So Proudly We Hail* (1943, d. Mark Sandrich)  
Chapter 5: *Saving Private Ryan* (1998, d. Steven Spielberg)

#### Module 8: The Auteurs

- Introductory Lesson: What is an Auteur?  
Chapter 1: *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940, d. John Ford)  
Chapter 2: *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943, d. Alfred Hitchcock)  
Chapter 3: *An American in Paris* (1951, d. Vincente Minnelli)  
Chapter 4: *4 Little Girls* (1997, d. Spike Lee)  
Chapter 5: *The Aviator* (2004, d. Martin Scorsese)