

# Annotated Film Bibliography

## Political Science 120 – Introduction to Politics

Ashcroft, R & M. (Producers, Directors, Writers). (2012). *The four horsemen*.

[Documentary]. United States: Janson Media.

*The modern day Four Horsemen continue to ride roughshod over the people who can least afford it. Crises are converging when governments, religion and mainstream economists have stalled. 23 international thinkers come together and break their silence about how the world really works and why there is still hope in re-establishing a moral and just society. Four Horsemen is free from mainstream media propaganda, doesn't bash bankers, criticize politicians or get involved in conspiracy theories. The film ignites the debate about how we usher a new economic paradigm into the world which, globally, would dramatically improve the quality of life for billions.*

Barker, J. (Director). (2011). *Marx reloaded*. [Documentary]. United States: ZDF,

Film Noirs.

*Marx Reloaded is a cultural documentary that examines the relevance of German socialist and philosopher Karl Marx's ideas for understanding the global economic and financial crisis of 2008-09. The crisis triggered the deepest global recession in 70 years and prompted the US government to spend more than 1 trillion dollars in order to rescue its banking system from collapse. Today the full implications of the crisis in Europe and around the world still remain unclear. Nevertheless, should we accept the crisis as an unfortunate side-effect of the free market? Or is there another explanation as to why it happened and its likely effects on our society, our economy and our whole way of life? Written and directed by Jason Barker - himself an experienced writer, lecturer, translator and doctor of philosophy - Marx Reloaded comprises interviews with the world's leading philosophers of Marxism, including those at the forefront of a popular revival in Marxist and communist ideas. The film also includes interviews with skeptics of this revival as well as light-hearted animation sequences which follow Marx's adventures through the matrix of his own ideas.*

Curtis, A. (Writer and Director). (2002). *The century of the self*. [Documentary].

United Kingdom. BBC / RDF Television.

*To many in politics and business, the triumph of the self is the ultimate expression of democracy, where power has finally moved to the people. Certainly, the people may feel they are in charge, but are they really? The Century of the Self tells the untold and sometimes controversial story of the growth of the mass-consumer society. How was the all-consuming self-created, by whom, and in whose interests?*

Davis, K., Sacci, F., & Heilbroner, D. (Producers). (2009). *Waiting for Armageddon*.

[Documentary]. United States: First Run Features.

*America's 50-million strong Evangelical community is convinced that the world's future is foretold in Biblical prophecy - from the Rapture to the Battle of Armageddon. This astonishing documentary explores their world - in their homes, at conferences, and on a wide-ranging tour of*

*Israel. By interweaving Christian, Zionist, Jewish and critical perspectives along with telling archival materials, the filmmakers probe the politically powerful - and potentially explosive - alliance between Evangelical Christians and Israel...an alliance that may set the stage for what one prominent Evangelical leader calls "World War III."*

**Garland, A. (Director). (2014). *Ex Machina*. [Motion Picture]. United States: A24.**

*Alex Garland, writer of 28 Days Later and Sunshine, makes his directorial debut with the stylish and cerebral thriller, Ex Machina. Caleb Smith (Domhnall Gleeson), a programmer at an internet-search giant, wins a competition to spend a week at the private mountain estate of the company's brilliant and reclusive CEO, Nathan Bateman (Oscar Isaac). Upon his arrival, Caleb learns that Nathan has chosen him to be the human component in a Turing Test—charging him with evaluating the capabilities, and ultimately the consciousness, of Nathan's latest experiment in artificial intelligence. That experiment is Ava (Alicia Vikander), a breathtaking A.I. whose emotional intelligence proves more sophisticated—and more deceptive—than the two men could have imagined.*

**Liu, D. (Director). (2018). *In the name of Confucius*. [Documentary]. Toronto:**

**Canada: Full Stride Films.**

*In the Name of Confucius is the first documentary film exposing the growing global controversies surrounding the Chinese government's multi-billion dollar Confucius Institute (CI), a Chinese language program attaching to over 1,600 foreign universities and schools around the world. Featuring the exclusive personal story of a former CI teacher, Sonia Zhao, whose defection and complaint led to the first closure of a CI on a North American campus, and the unprecedented outcry against Canada's largest school board, the TDSB, over its plan to open the world's largest CI, the film examines the risks that the Confucius Institutes could pose to our society—a loss of academic integrity, violations to human rights codes, foreign influence, and even potential infringements on national security. Re-enactments star former Miss World Canada Anastasia Lin.*

**Martin, A. (Editor and Narrator). (2020). *United States of distraction*.**

**[Documentary]. United States: Media Freedom Foundation.**

*United States of Distraction chronicles critical media literacy and faculty experts, students, and media makers who provide contextual analysis for understanding the current rise of the so-called "fake news" phenomenon. In addition to deconstructing fake news, the film reminds us that this is not a new development, but rather, a form of propaganda. The interviews provided in the film offer solutions for mitigating the pernicious influence of false content on America's democratic institutions.*

**Roy, M. & Crooks, H. (Directors). (2011). *Surviving progress*. [Documentary].**

**Canada: Cinemaginaire Productions**

*"Every time history repeats itself the price goes up." Surviving Progress presents the story of human advancement as awe-inspiring and double-edged. It reveals the grave risk of running the 21st century's software — our know-how — on the ancient hardware of our primate brain which hasn't been upgraded in 50,000 years. With rich imagery and immersive soundtrack, filmmakers Mathieu Roy and Harold Crooks launch us on journey to contemplate our evolution from cave-dwellers to space explorers. Ronald Wright, whose best-seller, "A Short History Of Progress"*

*inspired this film, reveals how civilizations are repeatedly destroyed by “progress traps” — alluring technologies serve immediate needs, but ransom the future. With intersecting stories from a Chinese car-driving club, a Wall Street insider who exposes an out-of-control, environmentally rapacious financial elite, and eco-cops defending a scorched Amazon, the film lays stark evidence before us. In the past, we could use up a region’s resources and move on. But if today’s global civilization collapses from over-consumption, that’s it. We have no back-up planet. Surviving Progress brings us thinkers who have probed our primate past, our brains, and our societies. Some amplify Wright’s urgent warning, while others have faith that the very progress which has put us in jeopardy is also the key to our salvation. Cosmologist Stephen Hawking looks to homes on other planets. Biologist Craig Venter, whose team decoded the human genome, designs synthetic organisms he hopes will create artificial food and fuel for all. Distinguished Professor of Environment Vaclav Smil counters that five billion “have-nots” aspire to our affluent lifestyle and, without limits on the energy and resource-consumption of the “haves”, we face certain catastrophe. Others — including primatologist Jane Goodall, author Margaret Atwood, and activists from the Congo, Canada, and USA — place their hope in our ingenuity and moral evolution. Surviving Progress leaves us with a challenge: To prove that making apes smarter was not an evolutionary dead-end.*

**Taylor, A. (Director). (2019). *What is democracy?* [Documentary]. Canada: Kino Lorber.**

*Coming at a moment of profound political and social crisis, What Is Democracy? reflects on a word we too often take for granted. Director Astra Taylor’s idiosyncratic, philosophical journey spans millennia and continents: from ancient Athens’ groundbreaking experiment in self-government to capitalism’s roots in medieval Italy; from modern-day Greece grappling with financial collapse and a mounting refugee crisis to the United States reckoning with its racist past and the growing gap between rich and poor. Featuring a diverse cast—including celebrated theorists, trauma surgeons, activists, factory workers, asylum seekers, and former prime ministers—this urgent film connects the past and the present, the emotional and the intellectual, the personal and the political, in order to provoke and inspire. If we want to live in democracy, we must first ask what the word even means.*

**Tevya. (Host and Narrator). (2013). *What is Hinduism?* [Documentary]. United States: TMW Media.**

*Host Tevya begins his spiritual quest by investigating Hinduism, a faith with some 900 million followers worldwide. He attends the Durga Puja festival, an annual celebration for the Hindu goddess Durga with his teen guide Kritika. Tevya explores Little India searching for a present for the goddess and learns a little Kathak dancing with Kritika along the way!*

**UCTV. (Producer). (2014). *Understanding Human Nature with Steven Pinker – Conversations with History.* [Interview]. Youtube.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJ9Ad6s8g7I>**

*Conversations host Harry Kreisler welcomes Harvard’s Steven Pinker, Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology, for a discussion of his intellectual journey. Pinker discusses the origins and evolution of his thinking on human nature. Topics include: growing up in Montreal in a Jewish family, the impact of the 1960s, his education, and the trajectory of his research interests. He explains his early work in linguistics and how he came to write his recent work, *The Better Angels**

*of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined. In the conversation, Pinker describes the importance of interdisciplinary research and analyzes creativity. He concludes with a discussion of how science can contribute to the humanities and offers advice to students on how to prepare for the future.*

**West, J. G. (Director). (2018). *Human zoos: America's forgotten history of scientific racism*. [Documentary]. United States: Discovery Institute.**

*Human Zoos tells the story of how thousands of indigenous peoples were put on public display in America in the early decades of the twentieth century. Often touted as "missing links" between man and apes, these native peoples were harassed, demeaned, and jeered at. Their public display was arranged with the enthusiastic support of the most elite members of the scientific community, and it was promoted uncritically by America's leading newspapers. The documentary also tells the story of a courageous group of African-American ministers who tried to stop one such 'Human Zoo' in New York City. The documentary features Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Pamela Newkirk, author of *Spectacle: The Astonishing Life of Ota Benga*.*

**Winston, J. (Producer and Director). (2010). *What's the matter with Kansas?* [Documentary]. United States: Abramorama Entertainment.**

*Based on the Thomas Frank best-seller, "What's the Matter with Kansas?" shows how Kansas transformed from an outpost of radicalism to a bastion of hard-core conservatism.*