

# COLLOQUIUM BY PETER A. YACAVONE

CIVILIZATION, RACE AND THE HOLLYWOOD WESTERN HERO: OR, HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING ABOUT CLEMENTINE CARTER AND LOVE CHIHUAHUA IN *MY DARLING CLEMENTINE* (1946)

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TIME: 5:00-6:00 PM, WEDNESDAY, 19 APRIL 2017

VENUE: ACADEMIC BUILDING 1079

Dear members of Duke Kunshan community,

I am most delighted to invite you to attend the colloquium by Dr Peter Yacavone this Wednesday. There will also be a **film screening at 19:00-21:00, Tuesday April 18, at AB3103** with Dr Yacavone of the film "My Darling Clementine", which will be discussed at the colloquium.

*Civilization, Race and the Hollywood Western Hero: or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying About Clementine Carter and Love Chihuahua in My Darling Clementine (1946)*

**Speaker:** Peter Yacavone, Associate Professor of English, Soochow University

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ABSTRACT:

Westerns featuring "cowboys 'n' Indians" were the most popular and influential genre of feature films from c. 1900 to the 1970s. Since then, Westerns have lost popularity partially because of the perception that they represented ethnicities such as Native Americans in a stereotypical fashion from the exclusive perspective of white male filmmakers who, it is often argued, glorified the white colonization of the historical West (at the expense of Native peoples) as being justified, progressive, and providential.

This lecture will assess whether such generalizations about Hollywood Westerns are accurate through a close reading of perhaps the most highly esteemed, yet misunderstood, example: John Ford's *My Darling Clementine* (1946), a fictionalized version of the notorious gunfight at

the O.K. Corral in Tombstone, AZ, 1881, an incident which made a public hero out of the gunfighter Wyatt Earp (1848-1929). Beginning with Ford's complete unfaithfulness to history and his textual allusions to Western movie clichés and Shakespeare's Hamlet, respectively, Dr. Peter Yacavone then will explore some famous critical misreadings of the film in regards to the character of Earp and the character of Chihuahua—a half-Native saloon girl—in order to reveal how Ford's Westerns develop as elegies for the passing of the multi-ethnic frontier and the coming of advanced white 'civilization' and capitalism.

BIO:

Peter A. Yacavone is Associate Professor of the School of Foreign Languages at Soochow University. He received a Ph.D. in Film and Television Studies from the University of Warwick, an M. Phil. in European Literature from the University of Oxford, an M.A. in Comparative Literature from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and a B.A. in Late Classics from Brown University. His research and teaching subjects include Shakespeare and modern drama; literary and film theory; American Literature; American cinema; popular literary, film, and television genres such as science fiction, crime fiction, humor, and The Western; Japanese literature and film; and classical and Latin literature.

This event is open to all and entry is on a first come, first served basis. For any queries email [yg73@duke.edu](mailto:yg73@duke.edu) or call 3665 7149.