

The Mummy: From Ancient Egypt to Modern Horror

Course Syllabus

Description

People have long been intrigued by mummies. This study group will look at the mummy in history, literature and film. We will begin with a discussion of mummification in ancient Egypt, how it was done and why. We will then look at public fascination with Egypt and mummies in the 19th and 20th centuries, culminating in the discovery of the tomb of King Tut in 1922 and the so-called mummy's curse. Finally, we will examine the place of the mummy in modern horror films.

Instructor

John Parascandola has a PhD in the History of Science. He has served on the faculties of the Universities of Wisconsin and Maryland and as a historian in the federal government. He is the author of several books. Dr. Parascandola has led several previous study groups for OLLI, including a version of this class.

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Course Outline

Day 1

Mummification in Ancient Egypt: How and Why

Assigned Reading:

"Egyptian Mummies" (will be emailed to class participants)

Wendy Marston, "Making a Modern Mummy" (will be emailed to class participants)

Day 2

Egyptomania, Mummies and the Curse in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Assigned Reading:

Bob Brier, "Egyptomania" (will be emailed to class participants)

Louisa May Alcott, "Lost in a Pyramid, or the Mummy's Curse"

<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks06/0603041h.html>)

Day 3

Mummies in the Movies

Assigned Reading:

“The Mummy in Movies”

<https://www.arabworldbooks.com/en/e-zine/the-mummy-in-movies>

“Where Does the Legend of the Mummy Come From”

<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20170420-where-does-the-legend-of-the-mummy-come-from>

James Grebey, “Which Movie Mummy Would Win in a Sarcophagus Smackdown? The Original, Remake, or Reboot?” (will be emailed to class participants)

Some Suggested Books for Further Reading

Bob Brier, *Egyptian Mummies: Unraveling the Secrets of an Ancient Art* (1994)

Bob Brier, *Egyptomania: Our Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs* (2013)

Matthew Coniam, *Egyptomania Goes to the Movies: From Archaeology to Popular Craze to Hollywood Fantasy* (2017)

Jasmine Day, *The Mummy’s Curse: Mummy Mania in the English-Speaking World* (2006)

Roger Luckhurst, *The Mummy’s Curse: The True History of a Dark Fantasy* (2012)

S. J. Wolfe with Robert Singerman, *Mummies in Nineteenth Century America: Ancient Egyptians as Artifacts* (2009)

