CALL FOR PAPERS

CFP: Wondrous Rescues
An area of multiple panels for the 2016 Film & History Conference:
Gods and Heretics: Figures of Power and Subversion in Film and Television
October 26-October 30, 2016
The Milwaukee Hilton
Milwaukee, WI (USA)

DEADLINE for abstracts: June 1, 2016

AREA: Wondrous Rescues

Deep down, most of us half-believe in magic. We love to think that if we wish hard enough, pray hard enough, cry hard enough, or simply deserve a much better life, someone will come to our aid and transform our wretchedness into joy.

Some view salvation of this kind as a sign of divine mercy, but a strikingly different viewpoint pervades fantasy films that involve (as so many of them do) miraculous rescues. There the Almighty is rarely mentioned by name—though the divine may get a bit of indirect credit for helping the hero or heroine. Moviegoers are far more accustomed to see salvation arrive by way of Santa Claus, Prince Charming, a good fairy, a benevolent ghost, an eccentric man or woman who seems not quite of this world, or a Mark-Twain-reading angel who hasn’t yet earned his wings.

Papers analyzing aspects of magical rescues in film, including who works the magic and how, and the appeal of such rescues to viewers of every age, are invited. Possible topics include:

- Guardian angels, angels-in-training (It’s a Wonderful Life, City of Angels, The Bishop’s Wife)
- Rescuers from the hereafter (Ghost, The Ghost and Mrs. Muir)
- Fairytale rescues: godmothers, godfathers, huntsmen, and princes
- Secular fantasy figures (A Simple Wish, Tooth Fairy, Miracle on 34th Street)
- Unexplained characters (Mary Poppins, Nanny McPhee)

Proposals for complete panels (three related presentations) are also welcome, but they must include an abstract and contact information, including an e-mail address, for each presenter. For updates and registration information about the upcoming meeting, see the Film & History website (www.filmandhistory.org).

Please e-mail your 200-word proposal by 1 June 2016 to the area chair:

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