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Introduction To Film And Media Studies (FMST 01) Syllabus

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Introduction to Film and Media Studies 2016

Screening, Sunday 7-10pm
LPAC Cinema

Class, M 1:15-4pm
Science Center 199 (Cuniff Lecture Hall)

Prof. Sunka Simon
Office Hours: W 9am-noon
Kohlberg #312
x7354, ssimon1

Course Website on Moodle: <https://moodle.swarthmore.edu>

Access to *Looking at Movies* EBook and Digital Resources (after purchase and registration): <https://digital.wwnorton.com/movies5>

Course Description

The invention of cinema at the end of the 19th century and the rapid developments of digital technologies most noticeable in our increased use of social networking tools on mini-screens mark a period in which communications technology shaped and shape our world and moving images evolved from the photographic to the digital. This course explores the specificity, history, and function of media forms, focusing on the language of cinema and the critical repertoire of film/media theories. As an art, a text, a technology, a commercial product, a psychological experience, and a social practice, cinema presents fascinating contradictions for study.

This lecture/discussion course, intended as a general introduction and as the first credit towards a minor or a major in Film and Media Studies, has two basic goals. First, it will develop skills in film analysis. You will become fluent in the vocabulary of film form and learn to construct an argument about what a film's sounds and images mean and how it structures and achieves its meanings. Second, it will provide an introduction to the theories, methods, and concerns of film and media studies as a discipline, preparing you for further work in the field.

The course will emphasize specific aspects of film style and narrative form through analysis of scenes from the films screened each week and from a range of outside examples. Each week will introduce historical, cultural and theoretical topics relevant to the films shown while focusing on the films' self-reflexivity of their medium, and considering the politics of image-making from the postwar period to today.

Texts (available at the College Bookstore)

1. Required:
Richard Barsam and David Monahan, *Looking at Movies* (5th Edition) (once you have purchased it, you have access to the EBook and the student resources assigned for homework and in preparation for papers and tests, most of these are also on Moodle)
2. Recommended: Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *Oxford History of World Cinema* (OWC)

Course Reserves

Additional required readings are available on electronic reserve through our weekly reading folders on Moodle. When you enroll in this class, you automatically register on our Moodle site. Go to the Moodle gateway and login. Here you can access course-related announcements, course documents and this online syllabus.

McCabe reserves houses pertinent film criticism. Consult Tripod for further material.

McCabe DVD/Video Reserves houses our selection of films and videos screened for the class on Sundays and in class. These visual resources are to stay available for me from Sunday through Tuesday. For individual or project-related group screenings, you may access them at McCabe between Wednesday and Saturday.

Supplementary Resources for Research

You can use *Looking at Movies* and [The Film Experience's website](#), the [Internet Movie Database](#) and the resource links on the [FMST homepage](#) for production credits, but learn to become familiar with more scholarly resources. Websites can be great assets and make fascinating research topics in the course of our media component, but they are not reliable as quotable resources. Try instead the library's *International Film Index*, *International Index to the Performing Art*, and the *MLA Index* for periodical literature, and our textbooks' extensive bibliographies for further reading.

Film Glossary and Flash Cards

Learn the discipline's idioms and terms with the chapter by chapter flashcards from *Looking at Movies* (on Moodle) and use [The Film Experience's Glossary](#) while you are reading and writing. You can access this glossary of key terms in dictionary or chapter format.

Course Requirements

1. Regular Attendance, Homework Preparation and Class Participation: 15 %

- **Attendance** at screenings and in class: More than one unexcused absence will negatively affect your grade!

- **Class Screenings** - Before each screening on Sunday night, read the Screening Checklist on Moodle to prepare yourself! Before class, watch the video tutorials appearing in the week's Moodle list!
- **Core Films Assignment** - To increase your historical and formal understanding of films, you need to watch at least one of the listed core films in addition to our class screening every week! This will prepare you to place our screened films in context and compare different uses of formal means to create meaning. Take notes and select two of these screened films for your Wiki assignments. You can find most of the films on DVDs in McCabe, or streamed on Amazon, Netflix or YouTube.
- **Readings** - The assigned readings will familiarize you with the new language of film, the critical, historical, theoretical, methodological and production aspects of film as an experience, an industry, an ideology, and an art form. And they will prod you to develop improved analytical viewing AND discussion skills! Diligently reading the articles before class will also prepare you for the contextualization of quotes in midterm and final exams!

2. Two small group wikis: 10% - Due Dates: Wiki 1: October 17, Wiki 2: November 7

Maximum of 4 students per group. Sign up for one each of the films listed under Screening Homework from before and after fall break and write a Moodle wiki entry for each film, encompassing: its place in 1) film history; 2) information about the director; 3) its formal elements; and 4) its second life in film criticism and media theory. Each of you needs to consult at least two print resources!

3. Midterm Exam: Take-Home Part and In-Class Part (Week 6): 15%

4. Twelve page shot-by shot film analysis paper, including Gif development, and Wordpress page (Week 8): 25% - Read Project Instructions on Moodle!

5. Group Presentation Project (Weeks 9, 10 and 13): 15%

Maximum of 3 students per group. Sign up for either week.

Objective: Presenting a specific topic by incorporating a 30 min. discussion of a chosen film or medium, either through close formal analysis of one-two scenes maximum, or an informed (!) discussion of medium-specificity (production, structure, content, dissemination, reception/audience/fan studies, how the medium has been theorized by pertinent academic critics –NOT Roger Ebert or Rotten Tomatoes!). Leading class discussion after the presentation for 10-15 mins. This is NOT show and tell or a behind the scenes look (e.g. “how Scorsese shot *Taxi Driver*”) – I expect an **analytical** process! Read Project Instructions on Moodle!

6. In-Class Final Exam: 20%

In-Class Etiquette

NO eating during class! Eat before 1:15pm or during break around 2:30pm!
NO cell phone use during class, unless instructed for educational purposes

Disability Accommodation

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Leslie Hempling in the Office of Student Disability Services (Parrish 113) or email lhempli1@swarthmore.edu to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs. As appropriate, she will issue students with documented disabilities a formal Accommodations Letter. Since accommodations require early planning and are not retroactive, please contact her as soon as possible. For details about the accommodations process, [visit the Student Disability Service Website](#). You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs. However, all disability-related accommodations must be arranged through Leslie Hempling in the Office of Student Disability Services.

Essential Formal Requirements for Writing Film Papers

1. Check spelling while you type!
2. Proofread!
3. Use a 1-inch margin all around!
4. Use double-spacing and Times, Helvetica or New York Fonts (12)!
5. Number all pages except your title page!
6. Use MLA-style citation (parenthetical reference to author's name and page number in text; (Bordwell 43) - PLUS give me a Works Cited list with full citations at the end of your paper!
7. Film Titles need to be underlined or italicized. After the **first** mention of the title, you include in parenthesis the film's director and year of release: *Dogma* (Kevin Smith, 1999).
8. When you introduce a significant character's name for the **first** time, include the actor's name in parenthesis: Lara Croft (Angelina Jolie). This information is readily available from reference works, the IMDB website or your own note-taking (another reason to stay for the credits!)
9. You do not need to footnote when quoting dialogue, just introduce the reader to the context of the scene you are about to quote.

LAM=Looking at Movies (Textbook, on Moodle and EBook)
All other Readings are also on Moodle

Week 1 Introduction

8/28 Screening - *The Hunger Games* (Gary Ross, 2011)

8/29 Introduction to Class and *Sherlock, Jr.* (Buster Keaton, 1924)

Readings for Week One

LAM Chapters 1 and 11

Tom Gunning, "The Aesthetics of Astonishment" (*FTC*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

Arrival of a Train etc. (Lumiere Brothers), Nosferatu (F.W. Murnau), Metropolis (Fritz Lang), Battleship Potemkin (Sergei Eisenstein), Birth of a Nation (D. W. Griffith), Body and Soul (Oscar Micheaux), Trip to the Moon (George Melies)

Week 2 Principles of Film Form

9/4 *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941)

9/5 Clips: *Citizen Kane*, *Blade Runner* (1982)

Readings for Week 2

LAM Chapters 2 and 10

Umberto Eco, "Casablanca or the Cliches are Having a Ball" (*On Signs*)

Raymond Bellour, "The Obvious and the Code" (*Narrative, Apparatus, Technology*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

The Bicycle Thief (de Sica), Rome Open City (Rossellini), La Strada (Fellini), Girl in Uniform (Sagan), The Great Dictator (Chaplin), The Searchers (John Ford), Stella Dallas (King Vidor), Casablanca (Michael Curtiz)

Week 3 Genres

9/11 *Singin' in the Rain* (Stanley Donen/Gene Kelly, 1952)

9/12 Clips: *Singin' in the Rain* (Stanley Donen/Gene Kelly, 1952), *Hello Dolly!* (Gene Kelly, 1969), *The Wiz!* (Sidney Lumet, 1978), *Shanghai Knights* (David Dobkin, 2003), *Moulin Rouge* (Baz Luhrmann, 2001), *Chicago* (Rob Marshall, 2002), *Hot Summer* (Joachim Hasler, 1968), *Mamma Mia!* (Phylida Lloyd, 2008), *Buffy: Once More with Feeling* (2001)

Readings for Week 3

LAM Chapter 3

Richard Dyer, "Entertainment and Utopia" (*Movies and Methods II*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

The Best Years of Our Lives (Wyler), Dance Girl Dance (Arzner), Some Like it Hot (Wilder), Fantasia (Disney), Streetcar Named Desire (Kazan), Morocco (von Sternberg), Rio Bravo (Hawks), 2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick, 1968), Hush Hush, Sweet Charlotte (Aldrich, 1964)

Week 4 Elements of Narrative

9/18 *Run Lola Run* (Tom Tykwer, 1998)

9/19 Clips: *Pulp Fiction* (Quentin Tarrantino, 1994), *Memento* (Christopher Nolan, 2001), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1919), *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (Robert Wise, 1979), *The Limey* (Steven Soderbergh, 1999), *Run Lola Run* (Tom Tykwer, 1998), *Persona* (Ingmar Bergman, 1966), *Ramblin' Rose* (Martha Coolidge, 1991)

Readings for Week 4

LAM Chapter 4

Michael Wedel, "Backbeat and Overlap: Time, Place, and Character Subjectivity in *Run Lola Run*" (*Puzzle Films*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

The Godfather I and II (Coppola), Dr. Strangelove (Kubrick), Vertigo (Hitchcock), Double Indemnity (Wilder), Rebel without a Cause (Ray), The Big Sleep (Hawks), Pulp Fiction (Tarrantino), Rashomon (Kurosawa)

Week 5 Thinking about Images: *Mise-en-Scène*

9/25 *Written on the Wind* (Douglas Sirk, 1956)

9/26 Clips: *M* (Fritz Lang, 1931), *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, Germany, 1926), *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982), *The Blue Angel* (Josef von Sternberg, 1930), *Juliet of the Spirits* (Frederico Fellini, 1965), *Down with Love* (Peyton Reed, 2003), *Angels and Insects* (Philip Haas, 1996), *Lola* (R.W. Fassbinder, 1981), *Pleasantville* (Gary Ross, 1998)

Readings for Week 5

LAM Chapter 5

Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (*FTC*)

Thomas Elsaesser, "Tales of Sound and Fury" (*Movies and Methods II*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

Chinatown (Polanski), American Graffiti (Lucas), Blade Runner (Scott), Apocalypse Now (Coppola), Body Heat (Kasdan), Barton Fink (Coen Brothers), Do the Right Thing (Lee), Daughters of the Dust (Dash), Far from Heaven (Haynes), Through a Glass Darkly (Bergman), The Blue Angel (von Sternberg), *Lola* (Fassbinder)

Week 6 Thinking about Moving Images: Cinematography

10/2 *The Birds* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1963)

10/3 In-Class Midterm (30 minutes)

Clips: *Wavelength* (Michael Snow, 1967), *Menschen am Sonntag* (Siodmak Brs., 1930), *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1992), *Wings of Desire* (Wim Wenders, 1987), *The White Hell of Pitz Palü* (Arnold Fanck, 1929), *The Last Laugh* (F.W. Murnau, 1924), *The 400*

Blows (1959), *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958), *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (Chris Columbus, 2001)

Readings for Week 6

LAM Chapter 6

Maya Deren, "Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality" (FTC)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

Easy Rider (Hopper), Sex, Lies and Videotape (Soderberg), Blue Velvet (Lynch), Mean Streets (Scorsese), Slacker (Linklater), Breathless (Godard), Jaws (Spielberg), Thriller (Potter), Don't Look Now (Roeg), Solaris (Tarkovsky)
Everyone: Watch *Wavelength* (1967) on google:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=5594638448098762852#docid=-3009876496807585942>

OCTOBER BREAK

Week 7 Acting and Performance

10/17 *12 Years a Slave* (Steve McQueen, 2013)

10/18 Clips: *In the Heat of the Night* (Jewison, 1967), *Daughters of the Dust* (Julie Dash, 1991), *Blade*, *Shaft*, *Color Purple*, *Ghost*, *Jumping Jack Flash*, *12 Years a Slave*, *How to get Away with Murder*, *Scandal*, *Streetcar Named Desire*, *Penny Dreadful*, *Cast-Away*, *Rainman*, *Forrest Gump*, *Gravity*, *The Martian*, *Still Alice*

Readings for Week 7

LAM Chapter 7

Read a few chapters of Solomon Northrup's memoirs:

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/northup/northup.html>

Watch one episode of *Scandal*, *Empire*, *Luther*, or *How to get Away with Murder* (on DVD from McCabe, Netflix or Amazon)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

In the Heat of the Night (Jewison), *Daughters of the Dust* (Dash), *Born in Flames* (Borden), *The 400 Blows* (Truffaut), *Desperately Seeking Susan* (Seidelman), *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Wiene), *This Sporting Life* (Andersen), *Lawrence of Arabia* (Lean), *Chocolat* (Dennis), *Aguirre-The Wrath of God* (Herzog), *Little Foxes* (Wyler), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (Nichols),

Week 8 Editing: Continuity and Disjunction

10/23 *Blow-Up* (Michelangelo Antonioni, Italy, 1966)

10/24 Clips from *Ballet Mécanique* (Ferdinand Leger, 1924), *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Maya Deren/Alexander Hammid, 1943), *Berlin- Symphony of a City* (Ruttman, 1927), *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925), *Invisible Adversaries* (Valie Export, 1977), *Yesterday Girl* (Alexander Kluge, 1966), *The Big Sleep* (Hawks), *The Third Man* (Welles)

Readings for Week 8

LAM Chapter 8

Peter Lev, "Blow Up, Swinging London and the Film Generation" (1989)

Janey Place and A.S. Peterson, "Some Visual Motifs in Film Noir" " (*Movies and Methods I*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

Man with a Movie Camera (Vertov), Berlin – Symphony of a City (Ruttman), Meshes of the Afternoon (Deren/Hammid), Bonnie and Clyde (Penn), The Third Man (Welles), Persona (Bergman), The Battle of Algiers (Pontocorvo), Reassemblage (Minh Ha)

Week 9 Sounding out the Image

10/30 *Tout Va Bien* (Jean-Luc Godard, and Jean-Pierre Gorin, France, 1972)

10/31 Clips: *Nashville* (Robert Altmann, 1975), *The Conversation* (F.F. Coppola, 1974), *Ten Minutes to Live* (Oscar Micheaux, 1932), *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum* (Volker Schlöndorff/Margarete von Trotta, 1975), *Invisible Adversaries* (Valie Export, 1977), *Marriage of Maria Braun* (R.W Fassbinder, 1978), *Ice Age: The Meltdown* (Carlos Saldanha, 2006), *Dirty Dancing* (Emile Ardolino, 1987), *The Wire* (David Simon and Ed Burns),

Readings for Week 9

LAM Chapter 9

John Belton, "Technology and Aesthetic of Film Sound" (*FTC*)

Claudia Gorbman, "Classical Hollywood Practice" (*CVF*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

Nashville (Altmann), *The Conversation* (Coppola), *Ten Minutes to Live* (Micheaux), *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum* (Schlöndorff/von Trotta), *Invisible Adversaries* (Export), *Marriage of Maria Braun* (Fassbinder), *The Sting* (Hill), *Doctor Zhivago* (Lean)

Week 10 Documentary Deconstructed – Group Projects I

11/6 *Grizzly Man* (Werner Herzog with footage by Timothy Treadwell, 2005)

11/7 Group Presentations and Discussions

Readings for Week 10

The Film Experience Chapter 7: Representing the Real: Documentary Films, 255-284

Michael Renov, "Toward a Poetics of Documentary" (*Theorizing Documentary*)

Trinh T. Minh-ha, Interview on "Inappropriate/d Artificiality"

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

Night and Fog (Resnais), *History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige* (Tajiri), *Performing the Border* (Biemann), [*Surname Viet Given Name Nam*](#) (Trinh T. Minh-ha), *Nanook of the North* (Flaherty), *The River* (Lorentz), *Thin Blue Line* (Morris), *Bowling for Columbine* (Moore), *A Mighty Wind* (Guest), *Blair Witch Project* (Sanchez/Myrick), *Shoah* (Lanzmann), *Harlan County, USA* (Kopple), *Titicut Follies* (Wiseman), *Rosie The Riveter* (Field)

Week 11 Live Broadcasts, Reality Television, and YouTube –Group Projects II

11/13 **No Class Screening - BUT:** In your Wiki Groups: Watch at least 2 hours of 1) a live sports event, 2) a live news cast or 3) a reality-show on TV (domestic or international). Then go

online to check websites for live and reported coverage of the same content/material! Take notes on differences and similarities in form and on media-specific representation! Be prepared to discuss in class!

11/14 Group Presentations and Discussions - Clips: RTV, [Paper Tiger Television](#), Kluge TV

Readings for Week 11:

The [Television Encyclopedia](#) (specifically "[Reality Programming](#)")

John Ellis, "Broadcast TV as Sound and Image" (*FTC*)

Jane Feuer, "The Concept of Live Television: Ideology as Ontology" (*Regarding Television*)

Sasha Torres, "King TV" (*Living Color*)

Week 12 Feminist and Queer Film Theory: Authorship, Image, Spectatorship – Group Projects III

11/20 *The Virgin Machine* ((Monika Treut, Germany, 1988)

11/21 Group Presentations and Discussion

Readings for Week 12

The Film Experience Chapter 11: Critical Theories and Methods, 399-434

Jean-Luc Cornolli and Jean Narboni. "Cinema/Criticism/Ideology" (*FTC*)

Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (*FandF*)

Claire Johnston, "Women's Cinema as Counter Cinema" (*FandF*)

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

Redupers (Helke Sander, 1977), Antonia's Line (Marleen Gorris, Netherlands, 1995), Blonde Venus (Sternberg, 1932), Gilda (Charles Vidor, 1946), Gentlemen prefer Blondes (Howard Hawks, 1953), The Piano (Jane Campion, Australia, 1992), Thelma and Louise (Ridley Scott, 1991), The Body Beautiful (Ngozi Onwurah, 1991), Carol (Todd Haynes), Pride (Matthew Warchus, 2014), Jeanne Dielman (Chantal Akerman, 1975), A Girl who walks home alone at night (Ana Lily Amirpour, Iran, 2014), The Apple (Samira Makhmalbaf, 1999), Under the Skin (Jonathan Glazer, 2013)

Thanksgiving Break November 24-27

Week 13 Postclassical Cinemas – Homage, Re-Appropriation and New Directions

11/27 *Taxi Driver* (Martin Scorsese, 1976)

11/28 Clips: *A Personal Journey through American Cinema* (Scorsese), *Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, 1967), *Easy Rider* (Dennis Hopper, 1969), *Jaws* (Steven Spielberg, 1975), *Night on Earth* (Jim Jarmusch, 1991), *The Fifth Element* (Luc Besson, 1997), *Traumschiff Surprise* (Michael Herbig, 2004)

Readings for Week 13

Martin Scorsese, "Taxi Driver" (*Scorsese on Scorsese*)

Linda Hutcheon, Chapter 1 of *A Theory of Adaptation*, 1-32

Henry Jenkins, "The Work of Theory in the Age of Digital Transformation"

Core Films for Homework Screening – Select at least one each week!

A Personal Journey through American Cinema (Scorsese), Bonnie and Clyde (Arthur Penn, 1967), Easy Rider (Dennis Hopper, 1969), Jaws (Steven Spielberg, 1975), Night on Earth (Jim Jarmusch, 1991), The Fifth Element (Luc Besson, 1997), Star Wars (Lucas), Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home (Nemoy, 1986)

NOTA BENE: Our FINAL EXAM takes place in SCI 199 between 1:15-4pm between

Course Bibliography – Filmography is on Moodle

- * Allen, Robert. *The Television Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- * Barsam, Richard and Dave Monahan. *Looking at Movies*. New York: Norton, 2016. 5th edition
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