

DRAM 2120: Introduction to Film Studies

COURSE SYLLABUS

Antje Ascheid
Office Hours: MW 11: 30- 1 pm
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Lectures: M-W, 10:10 – 11:00 am
Screening: W, 2:30- 4:25 pm
Sections: according to section group

Course Texts:

Bordwell/ Thompson, *Film Art* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2001)
Various articles available on electronic reserve and reserve at the library.
Password: **intro**

It is expected that you will have completed the reading by the first class meeting of each week.

Midterm and Final:

The midterm and final exams will be administered in class.

Essay:

The final paper (6-8) requires you to write an analysis of one of the films specified in discussion sections, which relates the films' style and aesthetics to aspects of their formal, thematic and historical specificity.

Quizzes:

There will be 10 quizzes given in class (on lecture and reading). There are no make-ups for quizzes. One documented excuse is acceptable in which case the quiz grade will be the average of the 9 quizzes that were taken.

Grading Breakdown:

Midterm: 25%, Essay: 20%, Quizzes: 20%, Attendance and Participation 10%, Final: 25%

Good writing skills are a must in this course. If you are not confident about your ability to craft a clearly written, articulate, well-organized essay, I will be happy to read drafts if they are submitted to me well ahead of the due date.

Attendance:

Attendance of all classes is required. Attendance will be taken in sections. You have one unexcused absence. Coming in late is disruptive, being late persistently will result in a lower final grade. For EACH unexcused absence in sections your final grade will be lowered. **Failure to attend sections more than 5 times will result in a final grade of F.** Excused absences are those that have been discussed with me or your teaching assistant ahead of time or for which you can provide reasonable documentation (parent, lawyer, doctor).

Plagiarism is a serious offense, which can result in a failing grade for the class and expulsion from the university. Acknowledge all reading and research sources with footnotes. Keep your exam books and a hard copy of your essays until you have received a final grade for this class.

- Week 1 (1/10) **Introduction, Modes of Production**
 Screening: *Lumiere Shorts + The Great Train Robbery + Sherlock Jr.*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch. 1, 464-471*
 Discussion: Lumiere vs. Keaton
- Week 2 (1/17) **Film Form**
 Screening: *Stagecoach (Ford, 1939)*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.2*
 Discussion: John Ford, Genre, Plot vs. Story
- Week 3 (1/24) **Classical Hollywood Cinema
 Screenwriting, Auteurism**
 Screening: *Citizen Kane (Welles, 1941)*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.3, 481-484*
 Discussion: Is *Citizen Kane* a classical Hollywood film?
- Week 4 (1/31) **Mise-en-scène, Framing**
 Screening: *Visions of Light (McCarthy, 1992)*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.6*
 Discussion: Analysis of various film clips
- Week 5 (2/7) **Camera Movement, the Long Take and Perspective
 Relations**
 Screening: *The Graduate (Nichols, 1967)*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.7*
 Discussion: *The Graduate*. Ben and the Anti-hero.
- Week 6 (2/14) **Editing 1: The Continuity Codes of Classical Narrative Cinema
 and Point-of-View**
 Screening: *Rear Window (Hitchcock, 1954)*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch. 8 (295-333),*
 Robert Stam, "A Paradigmatic Instance: Hitchcock's *Rear*
 Window (Columbia UP: New York, 1992), pp. 43-55, on
 e-reserve
 Discussion: *Rear Window*. An allegory of Cinema?
- Week 7 (2/21) **2/21 Midterm EXAM**
**Editing 2: Alternatives to Continuity Editing, Soviet
 Montage, Surrealism, New Waves**
 Screening: *Breathless (Godard, 1960)*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.8 (333-346.), 478-481, 486-489, 428-433*
 Discussion: Godard, film noir & jump cuts
- Week 8 (2/28) **Sound (classical and alternative), Independent Cinema**
 Screening: *The Conversation (Coppola, 1974)*
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.9, 489-493*
 Discussion: Coppola, Sound, and the New Hollywood
- Week 9 (3/7) **Ideology in Film, Film Theory, Politics and Film**
 Screening: *Bicycle Thief (de Sica, 1948)*
 Reading: Louis Giannetti, *Understanding Movies* (Upper Saddle
 River: Prentice Hall, 2002), Ch. 10, 11, on e-reserve
 Discussion: *Bicycle Thief*. Entertainment vs. politics?
- Week 10 (3/14) **Spring Break**

- Week 11 (3/21) **Documentary & Experimental Film**
 Screening: *Land Without Bread* (Bunuel, 1936)
 Blood in the Face (Bohlen, Rafferty, Ridgeway, 1991)
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.5*
 Discussion: Can/should documentaries be objective?
- Week 12 (3/28) **Film Genre: The Western, Action Movies**
 Screening: *Unforgiven* (Eastwood, 1993)
 Readings: *Film Art, Ch.4*
 Thomas Schatz, *Hollywood Genres*, "Film Genres
 and the Genre Film," on e-reserve.
 Jim Kitses, *Horizons West*, "Authorship and Genre:
 Notes on the Western," on e-reserve
 Discussion: Clint Eastwood: genre, stardom, authorship
- Week 13 (4/4) **Film Genre: Science Fiction, Horror**
 Film: *Dead Ringers* (Cronenberg, 1988)
 Readings: Linda Williams, "Film Bodies, Genre and Excess," *Film Genre
 Reader II*, on e-reserve
 Liane McLarty, "'Beyond the Veil of the Flesh': Cronenberg and
 the Disembodiment of Horror," on e-reserve
 Discussion: Cronenberg and film fantasy.
- Week 14 (4/11) **4/13 PAPERS DUE**
Race and the Cinema: Race Movies, Blaxploitation, Lee
 Screening: *Do the Right Thing* (Lee, 1989)
 Reading: *America on Film*, Ch. 4 on e-reserve, *Film Art* 361-366
 Discussion: What is the "right thing"?
- Week 15 (4/18) **Women and Film: The Woman's Film vs. the Woman Director**
 Screening: *Mildred Pierce* (Curtiz, 1945)
 Reading: *America on Film*, Ch. 13, on e-reserve
 Jeanine Basinger, "The Women's Film: The Genre," on e-
 reserve.
 Discussion: A feminist/femine aesthetic? Do women make different movies?
- Week 16 (4/25) **World Cinema Today: Hong Kong, Bollywood, Iran and more...**
 Screening: *In the Mood for Love* (Won Kar-Wai, 2000)
 Discussion: Won Kar-Wai, Prep for Final
- Week 17 (5/2) **Cinema and Globalization, Final Discussion**
- 5/5 **Final EXAM at 9am**