

FILM 7000 3.0

KEY CONCEPTS IN CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES

YORK UNIVERSITY / FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES / GRADUATE PROGRAM IN FILM
FALL 2008

Professor Janine Marchessault and Professor Michael Zryd

Office: JM: GCFA 303G / MZ: CFT 210

Telephone: JM: 416-736-2100 x 33485 / MZ: x22513

Office hours: JM: Wednesday 2-5 / MZ: Monday 12-1pm, 6-7 pm; Thursday 2-3pm

E-mail: jmarches@yorku.ca ; zryd@yorku.ca

Seminar: Thursday 10:00am – 2:00pm, CFT 137

Course Website/Blog: <http://film7000.wordpress.com/>

Description:

The course will explore key concepts, texts and debates in the field of contemporary cinema and media studies. A central focus of the course will be on the intellectual and material histories of cinema studies and media studies as disciplines (and their recent convergence), including the development of different models of film study (film as art, culture, sociological force, industry, etc); the development of classical film theory and film criticism; semiotics and feminist film theory; the historical turn; and the mutual influence of other disciplines in relation to the study of cinema and media. These histories will consider epistemological and ontological frameworks, methodological approaches, and institutional and technological supports for these traditions of study. The course will nevertheless emphasize recent developments in cinema and media studies.

Three broad areas of study will structure the course: cinema and cultural theory (including theories of the cinematic image and sound); national and transnational cinema and culture (from local to global perspectives, and incorporating broad categories of social identity, including class, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, language, and religion); and cinema and technologies of the image (including considerations of pre-cinematic (e.g., projection, photography) and post-cinematic (the digital) on the very constitution of film as a medium of study. The course will consider the question of Canadian approaches to cinema and media Studies: Is there a practice or methodology that is unique to the Canadian context? In addition to gaining an advanced understanding of the field of cinema and media studies, students will sharpen research questions guiding their future individual research projects.

Texts:

All required readings will be made available to students.

SUGGESTED:

James Donald and Michael Renov, eds. *The Sage Handbook of Film Studies*. London: Sage, 2008. [SAGE]

Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, ed. *The Oxford History of World Cinema*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997.

John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson, eds.. *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998. (OGFS)

Wayne Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd. ed. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2008.

Evaluation:

- a) Participation 20%
- b) Two Synthesis Papers 30% (15% ea)
- c) Oral Presentation (+ written version) 20%
- d) Final Paper 30% (alternately students can choose to write 6 Synthesis Papers @ 10% each)

a) Participation:

Being part of an intellectual community means attending class regularly and punctually, reading thoughtfully in advance and involving yourself in class discussions in a way that enables you and other students to learn. Since this course requires a great deal of close reading, students will be asked to come to each class with three comments on readings: 1) something that was surprising in the readings; 2) an insight into a phenomenon that the readings enabled; 3) a question/problem.

The website blog is an important aspect of the course. Students are encouraged to contribute to it on an on-going basis (post thoughts and ideas; add links, CFPs, events, book and film reviews etc.).

b) Synthesis Papers x 2: Students will be asked to summarize a cluster of readings in the course. This will give you an opportunity to engage in a critical dialogue with the readings. You may select readings that will help you to formulate the problematic for your final essay. 4-5 pages per synthesis.

c) Oral presentation: Students are asked to summarize one of the assigned readings and to provide a written summary due at least two days before oral presentation, posted to class blog.

These will be assigned the second week of classes. You will be required to summarize the major points or themes of the article, compare and contrast the viewpoints expressed in the piece with those of other authors and critically assess the article and its relationships to the broader themes and issues considered in the course. The student must prepare three to four questions from the reading to facilitate class discussion. Students are

evaluated on the quality of ideas and material presented and the ability to generate response amongst seminar participants.

Each student must summarize the above in written form and distribute it to the class in advance of the discussion. The oral presentation of reading should not exceed 20 minutes in length.

d) Essay:

Students undertake a research essay directly pertaining to the work discussed in this class. Final paper topics must be approved by the professors. Alternately, students can choose to write six Synthesis Papers @ 10% each.

Ethics Reminder

If your final project will involve human participants (*e.g.* conducting interviews with anyone outside of the class; videotaping people for a hypermedia project), you will need to demonstrate familiarity with the ethics requirements of the university when you submit your proposal. You can find the university policy regarding ethics here: www.yorku.ca/ffares/Ethics.htm

Seminar Schedule (subject to change)

Many of the classes will include screenings of film and various media. These have not been scheduled, as we will curate works that respond to research interests and the organic development of the course materials. We will make every effort to follow the syllabus as outlined, but reserve the right to make scheduling changes when further discussion of a given topic is required or to take advantage of unforeseen events and opportunities. Web resources may be added throughout the term for enrichment and to reflect students' interests. Please check the class blog for up-to-date scheduling information and last minute changes.

Course Schedule

Week 1 - 11 SEPT - Introduction

Week 2 - 18 SEPT – Cinema Studies in North America to 1960: New Exploration of Early Paradigms

Required reading:

Dana Polan. "Introduction." *Scenes of Instruction: The Beginnings of the U.S. Study of Film*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2007.

Dana Polan. "North America." *SAGE*. 9-24.

Haidee Wasson. "Making Cinema A Modern Art," and "Rearguard Exhibition: The Film Library's Circulating Programs." *Museum Movies: The Museum of Modern Art and the Birth of Art Cinema*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005.

Suggested Reading:

Ian Aitken. "European Film Scholarship." *SAGE*. 25-53.

Stephanie Hemelryk Donald and Paola Voci. "China: Cinema, Politics and Scholarship." *SAGE*. 54-73.

Ismail Xavier. "Cinema Studies in Brazil." *SAGE*. 95-100.

Noel King, Constantine Verevis and Deane Williams. "Australia." *SAGE*. 112-122.

Week 3 – 25 SEPT - Cinema And Cultural Theory I - David Bordwell v Slavoj Zizek: Interpretation, and "Post Theory"

Required reading:

David Bordwell. *Making Meaning: Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989.

David Bordwell. "Contemporary Film Studies and the Vicissitudes of Grand Theory." *Post-Theory: Reconstructing Film Studies*. Eds. David Bordwell and Noël Carroll. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1996. 3-36.

Slavoj Zizek. "Introduction: The Strange Case of the Missing Lacanians," and "Universality and Its Exception." *The Frigate of Real Tears: Krzysztof Kieslowski between Theory and Post-theory*. London: BFI, 2001. 1-30.

Suggested Reading:

Murray Smith. "Film and Philosophy." *SAGE*. 147-163.

Hamish Ford. "Difficult Relations: Film Studies and Continental European Philosophy." *SAGE*. 164-179.

Jane Gaines. "Cinema/Ideology/Society: The Political Expectations of Film Theory." *SAGE*. 361-375.

Week 4 – 2 OCT - Cinema And Cultural Theory II - Realism Reconsidered: Time, Moments and Drift - Bazin and Deleuze

Required reading:

André Bazin. "Ontology of the Photographic Image"; "Charlie Chaplin"; "Films of Exploration"; "Marginal Notes on Eroticism." *What is Cinema?* Vols. 1 & 2. Berkeley: U of California P, 1967-71.

André Bazin. "Death Every Afternoon" *Rites of Realism: Essays on Corporeal Cinema*. Ed. Ivone Margulies. Durham: Duke UP, 2003. 27-32.

Serge Daney. "The Screen of Fantasy (Bazin and Animals)." *Rites*. 32-41.

Philip Rosen. "History of Image, Image of History: Subject and Ontology in Bazin." *Rites* 42-79.

Mary-Ann Doane. "The Object of Theory." *Rites*. 80-92.

Gilles Deleuze. Excerpts from *Cinema 2: The Time Image*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986.

Suggested Reading:

George Kouvaros. "'We Do Not Die Twice': Realism and Cinema." *SAGE*. 376-390.

NO CLASS 9 OCT – Yom Kippur

Week 5 – 16 OCT - Cinema And Cultural Theory III - Identity Politics in the Age of Animation – Ranciere and Zizek

Required reading:

Jacques Rancière. *The Future of the Image*. London: Verso, 2007.

Jacques Rancière. *The Politics Of Aesthetics: The Distribution Of The Sensible*. New York: Continuum, 2004.

Tom Conley. "Cinema and its Discontents: Jacques Ranciere and Film Theory." *SubStance* 34:3 (2005) 96-106.

Suggested Reading: TBA

Week 6 – 23 OCT – The Historical Turn in Cinema and Media

Required reading:

Sumiko Higashi, et al. "In Focus: Film History, or a Baedeker Guide to the Historical Turn." *Cinema Journal* 44.1 (Fall 2004): 94-143.

Tom Gunning. "The Whole Town's Gawking: Early Cinema and the Visual Experience of Modernity." *Yale Journal of Criticism* 7.2 (Fall 1994): 189-201.

Tom Gunning. "Early American Film." *OGFS* 255-171.

Ben Singer. "Making Sense of the Modernity Thesis." *Melodrama and Modernity*. New York: Columbia UP, 2001. 101-130 + endnotes.

David Bordwell. *On the History of Film Style*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1997). 141-146.

Charlie Keil. "'To Here From Modernity.' Style, Historiography, and Transitional Cinema." *American Cinema's Transitional Era: Audiences, Institutions, Practices*. Eds. Charlie Keil and Shelley Stamp. Berkeley: U of California P, 2004. 51-65.

Suggested Reading:

Vanessa Schwartz. "Film and History." *SAGE*. 199-215.

Week 7 – 30 OCT - National and Transnational Cinema I - Dis-Locations and Place

Required reading: TBA +

Rey Chow. "A Phantom Discipline." *PMLA* 116.5 (2001): 1386-1395.

Suggested Reading:

Bhaskar Sarkar. "Postcolonial and Transnational Perspectives." *SAGE*. 123-144.

Week 8 – 6 NOV - National and Transnational Cinema II - Mobility, Circulation and the New Political Economies of Images

Required reading:

Toby Miller, Nitin Govil, John McMurria, Ting Wang, Richard Maxwell. *Global Hollywood No 2*. London: BFI, 2008. Ch. 1-4.

John Urry "Connectivity and Imagining" in *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007. 156-184

Excerpt from Judith Butler and Gayatri Spivak. *Who Sings the Nation-State?: Language, Politics, Belonging*. New York: Seagull Books, 2007.

Suggested Reading:

Philip Crang, Claire Dwyer and Peter Jackson. "Transnationalism and the Spaces of Commodity Culture." *Progress in Human Geography* 27: 4 (2003): 438-456.

Week 9 – 13 NOV - Cinema and Technologies of the Image I - Database/Vector

Required reading:

Lev Manovich. "What is Digital Cinema" (<http://www.manovich.net/TEXT/digital-cinema.html>).

Lev Manovich. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001. Ch. 5.

Sean Cubitt *The Cinema Effect*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004. Ch. 2

Gene Youngblood "Cinema and the Code." *Future Cinema: The Cinematic Imaginary After Film*. Eds. Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003.

Paul Virilio. *Desert Screen: War at the Speed of Light*. London: Continuum, 2002.

Suggested Reading:

Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: the making typographic man*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1962. 124-150.

Week 10 – 20 NOV - Cinema and Technologies of the Image II - Technology and Borders, New Media, the Avant-garde and Documentary

Required reading: TBA

Week 11 – 27 NOV - Cinema and Technologies of the Image III - Affect and Subjectivity

Required reading:

Kaja Silverman. *World Spectators*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000. 1-50.

Brian Massumi. *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Durham: Duke UP, 2002. 46-67.

Elizabeth Grosz. *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth*. New York: Columbia UP, 2008. excerpt TBA

Paul Virilio *Art as Far as the Eye Can See*. Oxford: Berg, 2007.

Suggested Reading:

Vivian Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye; A Phenomenology of Film Experience*. New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1991. 3-50.

Week 12 – 4 DEC - New Directions in Cinema and Media Studies II

Required reading: TBA