
FS 373R, Spring 2015 – Topics in Film Studies: Bodies on Screen
T/Th 11:50-1:30 in Elizer 257

Dr. Elizabeth Venell – evenell@emory.edu
Office hours – T/Th 2-3pm + appointment
Module 2, Office 2

Course description: Topics in Film Studies gives students an opportunity to continue their study of film theory, history, and form beyond the broad scope of the introductory course. *Bodies on Screen* organizes this advanced study through the premise that film spectatorship is summarized with deceptive simplicity: almost all of the time that we are watching movies, we are watching bodies on screen. Accordingly, much of film theory is concerned with questions of representation—how and why do we watch those bodies? How do cameras and subjects interact with one another, and through what interpretive frameworks, or theories, do we understand the interaction between subject and apparatus? The course will explore representations of embodied difference (such as gender, race, and ability); theories of spectatorship; ‘gaze theory’ and the ‘body genres;’ film authorship; the effects of new film technologies on representation; and contemporary debates in film studies.

Prerequisites: FS 270 or permission from the instructor.

Textbook: *Reinventing Film Studies*. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams, eds. Additional assigned readings will be available through Blackboard.

Format: Since there is no group screening time for the course, students are responsible for watching the films on their own, and still required to take screening notes for reference during class discussion and on papers. In general, screenings should be completed before the first class meeting of the week. Reading for the week should be begun by Tuesday and completed by Thursday.

Evaluation: Participation (20%) is composed of attendance as well as informed and thoughtful contributions to class discussions. Come to class prepared and on time, and stay for the whole period. You are allowed two absences without penalty, but beyond that allowance, your grade will drop with every absence. Each essay is worth 15% of the final grade (60%), and a final project (20%) is due in lieu of an in-class exam; aspects of the project may be broken up into component parts during the semester and graded separately; presentations will be held during the exam period. Late work is not eligible for full credit.

Inquiries about grades can usually be answered by referring to the syllabus. Specific questions about grades should be addressed during Office Hours.

Honor Code: As in all courses, students are required to abide by the Oxford College Honor Code, available for review at http://www.oxford.emory.edu/audiences/current_students/Academic/academic-success/student-honor-code. In film studies, common knowledge extends to basic information about a film, including its year, director, cast, and country of origin. However, plot summaries and other analyses are the unique work of particular authors, and they require citation. Content from outside sources,

including specific arguments, descriptive phrases, and general information beyond the scope of our class discussions must be cited.

Additional Policies and Etiquette: Lolololol don't text during class or movies. No electronic devices (included but not limited to cell phones and tablets) are permitted during classes and screenings. Exceptions must be approved by the instructor on a case-by-case basis (for example, the course is conducted in accordance with the ADA). Violations of the electronic device policy will destroy your participation grade.

Additionally, this syllabus forms an implied contract. The schedule is subject to change only at the instructor's revision; students are required to complete all of the above as scheduled, including assignments distributed in class and exercises conducted in class. Significant amendments to the syllabus will be made in writing.

Note on Explicit Content: During the lectures and screenings, students will encounter graphic content, including but not limited to nudity, explicit sexuality, vulgarity, drug use, and violence, which may be troubling to viewers. Enrollment in this course indicates the student's awareness of this fact, as well as a willingness to approach these representations in a mature—and sensitive—scholarly manner. If you are concerned that particular themes or images may be triggering, alternative or supplementary arrangements can be made in advance and in coordination with the instructor.

Course Schedule: (Essays: Jan 22, Feb 12, Mar 5, Apr 2.)

13-Jan	Course structure and introductions	
	Wes Anderson film OR David Lynch film	
15-Jan	André Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema"	
20-Jan	Christian Metz, "On the Impression of Reality in the Cinema"	
	Orlando (Sally Potter, 1992)	
22-Jan	Janet Staiger, "Authorship Approaches"	
	Essay #1 due	
27-Jan	RFS: "Film Theory and the Revolt Against Master Narratives"	34-52
	Pan's Labyrinth (Guillermo del Toro, 2007)	
29-Jan	Jennifer Orme: "Narrative Desire and Disobedience in Pan's Labyrinth"	
3-Feb	Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"	
	The Piano (Jane Campion, 1993)	
5-Feb	Mulvey, "Afterthoughts"	
10-Feb	Linda Williams, "Body Genres: Gender, Genre, and Excess"	
	Jackass: The Movie (2002) OR High Tension (2003)	
12-Feb	Essay #2 due	
17-Feb	RFS: "Case Study: Interpreting Singin' in the Rain"	53-75
	Singin' in the Rain (Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen, 1952)	
19-Feb	Carol Clover, "Dancin' in the Rain"	

24-Feb	Timothy Corrigan, "The Commerce of Auteurism"	
	The Virgin Suicides (Sophia Coppola, 1999)	
26-Feb	Todd Kennedy, "Off with Hollywood's Head"	
3-Mar	RFS: "Rethinking Genre"	221-243
	All That Heaven Allows (Douglas Sirk, 1955)	
5-Mar	Essay #3 due	
10/12-Mar	Spring Break	
17-Mar	Doane: "Pathos and Pathology"	
	Far From Heaven (Todd Haynes, 2002)	
19-Mar		
24-Mar	Excerpts from the work of Barbara Creed and Carol Clover	
	A Tale of Two Sisters (Kim Jee-woon, 2003)	
26-Mar	KK Seet, "Mothers and Daughters"	
31-Mar	Andrew Sarris, "Auteur Theory Revisited"	
	I'm a Cyborg, But That's OK (Park Chan-wook, 2006)	
2-Apr	Essay #4 due	
7-Apr	Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding"	
	Thelma & Louise (Ridley Scott, 1991)	
9-Apr	RFS: "Reception Theory and Audience Research"	165-182
14-Apr	RFS: "Discipline and Fun: Psycho and Postmodern Cinema"	351-378
	Psycho (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)	
16-Apr	William Paul, "What Rough Beasts: Confessions of a Gross-Out Maven"	
21-Apr	RFS: "The End of Cinema: Multi-Media and Technological Change"	438-452
	Afflicted (Derek Lee & Clif Prowse, 2013)	
23-Apr		

Monday, May 4, 2-5pm: Presentations on final projects.