

FIL 3052: Foundations of Film & New Media Film History 1 (1888-1960)

Class: TR 11:00am-12:15pm
Screening: T 5:00pm

Classroom: CPR 255
Screening: CPR 356

Instructor: Todd Jurgess
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Office: Cooper 387
Office Hours: W, 12:30-2:00pm



Left: *Gold Diggers of 1933*; Right: *Banshun / Late Spring*

Texts

Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction* (McGraw-Hill, 2018). Note: there are at least four editions of this textbook. Older editions are available at much cheaper rates on the used market, and for our purposes, these are perfectly acceptable.

Other course texts are available through the Course Reserves tab on Canvas. Students are responsible for printing these readings out and bringing them to class on the days designated in the schedule.

Course Description

FIL 3052 offers students an advanced survey of film and film culture from the birth of cinema in the 1880s to the collapse of the Hollywood studio system in the late 1950s. In between these moments, we will examine cinema's development as an aesthetic and cultural practice through a global lens, looking at the development of cinema across cultures and between various historical moments.

Along the way, we'll look at cinema from around the world, with special emphases on national film movements (ex. German Expressionism, Soviet Montage) as well as specific focuses like independent cinema, experimental and documentary filmmaking, LGBTQ directors of the silent and studio eras, and more.

Additionally, students will see the various ways that the history and philosophy of cinema has been depicted over time, both through close examination of cinema's technological and formal evolution as well as readings in classical film theory, in addition to the *Film History* textbook, which sketches out broad trends within individual periods of film history.

Prerequisite: Students must complete FIL 1002: Introduction to Film & New Media Studies before enrolling in Foundations of Film & New Media.

Course Objectives:

Students taking this course will:

- Read films within their aesthetic and historical context
- Examine film history as an international process
- Master basic information about film history, its key players, and broad trends
- Form research projects concerning film history, relying upon scholarly research and a formal written essay articulating the student's findings

Student Learning Outcomes

Students taking this course will be able to:

- Examine the historical and aesthetic forces shaping cinema in a variety of historical periods
- Compare and contrast written and visual texts
- Analyze visual and narrative structure in a variety of cinematic modes
- Use critical thinking to examine research and primary sources and to articulate these findings in a substantive formal written essay.

Assignments

Reading Quizzes (10%)

Each week, students will take an online quiz on course readings assigned for the week. Quizzes open on Thursdays and are due on Tuesdays.

Class Leads (10%)

At several points in the semester, students will be put into small groups and asked to prepare short "leads" to set up class discussion. While all students are responsible for keeping up with material, students assigned leads for a given day are tasked with providing discussion when/if discussion otherwise flags. Students prepare some ideas for discussion points with quotations or specific aspects of a film in mind.

Midterm/Final Exam (20% x 2)

At the midterm, students will be given several prompts focusing on issues from the first half of class. Students will choose from those prompts and compose written responses to the prompts' premises.

Research Project (40%)

For an end-of-semester project, students will conceptualize and execute a formal research project examining further some issue focused on in class.

Component parts of the assignment include the following:

- a pre-writing meeting
- annotated bibliography
- detail analyses
- a rough draft
- final draft

Grading Scale

Final grades are discerned by the overall percentage you earn on each assignment, totaled into a percentage out of 100. In case of decimals, grades jump up to the next bracket if above the .5 decimal (so a 89.5 is an A-). Anything below a 60 is an F.

A+ (100-97) A (96-94) A- (93-90) B+ (89-87) B (86-84) B- (83-80)
C+ (79-77) C (76-74) C- (73-70) D+ (69-67) D (66-64) D- (63-60)

Course Schedule

Please note: Course calendar subject to change. FH = *Film History* textbook; CR = course reserves on Canvas

Week 1 (Aug 21 to Aug 25)

- T Introductions (Early Photography, Muybridge and Marey)
 Read: Film History, chap. 1
- T Screening 1: Early Cinema Program (51 films, see the appendix for the complete list of films)
- R The Cinema of Attractions, Early Cinema Viewership
 Read: Gunning, "The Cinema of Attraction[s]: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde"
- F Drop/Add ends

Week 2 (Aug 28 to Sep 1)

- T Film Form in Early Cinema
 Read: Film History, chap. 2 and Norindr, "'La Trace Lumière': Early Cinema and Colonial Propaganda"
- T Screening 2: "La femme du lutteur" / "The Wrestler's Wife" (1906, Albert Capellani)
 "L'ecrin du rajah" / "The Rajah's Casket" (1906, Gaston Velle)
 "Raja Harishchandra" (1913, Dhundiraj Govind Phalke)
 "The Musketeers of Pig Alley" (1912, D.W. Griffith)
 "A Corner in Wheat" (1909, D.W. Griffith)
 "Easy Street" (1917, Charles Chaplin)
 Afgrunden / *The Abyss* (1910, Urban Gad)
- R Early Audiences, Mass Culture
 Read: Hansen, "Early Audiences: Myths and Models"

Week 3 (Sep 4 to Sep 8)

T Founding Histories, Nations
Read: *Film History*, chap. 3
Watch: The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1920, Robert Wiene)

T Screening 3: *Nosferatu* (1922, F.W. Murnau)

R German Expressionism
Read: *Film History*, chap. 5

Week 4 (Sep 11 to Sep 15)

T Expressionist Politics
Read: Kracauer, excerpts from *From Caligari to Hitler*

T Screening 4: *Battleship Potemkin* (1925, Sergei Eisenstein)

R Revolutionary Film Language
Read: *Film History*, chap. 6 and Eisenstein, "The Dramaturgy of Film Form"

Week 5 (Sep 18 to Sep 22)

T Global Experimentation

T Screening 5: "Le retour à la raison" / "The Return of Reason" (1923, Man Ray)
"La glace a trois faces" / "The Three-Sided Mirror" (1927, Jean Epstein)
"Un Chien Andalou" (1929, Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí)
"A Day in the Life of a Coal Miner" (1910, ?)
Nanook of the North (excerpts) (1922, Robert J. Flaherty)
"Fieldwork Footage" (1928, Zora Neale Hurston)

R Experimental and Documentary Approaches
Read: Rony, "Taxidermy and Romantic Ethnography: *Nanook of the North*"

Week 6 (Sep 25 to Sep 29)

T Experiments in Cinema
Read: *Film History*, chap. 4 (section "The French Impressionist Movement"), chap. 8 (sections "Film Experiments Outside the Mainstream Industry" and "Documentary Features Gain Prominence") and *Film Manifesto Megamix* (1920s/30s)

T Screening 6: *Gold Diggers of 1933* (1933, Mervyn LeRoy and Busby Berkeley)

R Hollywood Studio Filmmaking and the Depression
Read: *Film History*, chap. 9 and Schatz, excerpt from *Genius of the System*

Week 7 (Oct 2 to Oct 6)

T Spectacle and Gender Politics in Classic Hollywood

- T Screening 7: Birthright (1939, Oscar Micheaux)
- R Race Films and American Independent Cinema
 Read: Bowser and Spence, excerpt from *Writing Himself into History*

Week 8 (Oct 9 to Oct 13)

- T Italian Neorealism
 Read: Film History, chap. 16
 Due: Midterm Exam
- T Screening 8: Paisan (1946, Roberto Rossellini)
- R Ethical Demands and Postwar Cinema
 Read: Bazin, "Evolution of the Language of Film" and "An Aesthetic of Reality"

Week 9 (Oct 16 to Oct 20)

- T Postwar International Arthouse Film
 Read: Bordwell, "The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice"
- T Screening 9: Late Spring (1949, Yasujirō Ozu)
- R Censorship and Political Subversion
 Read: Sorensen, excerpts from *Censorship of Japanese Films During the U.S. Occupation of Japan*

Week 10 (Oct 23 to Oct 27)

- T Postwar Japan, the Politics of Memory, and the Poetics of Cinema
 Read: Poems by Takiguchi Masako and Saga Nobuyuki
- T Screening 10: Stray Dog (1949, Akira Kurosawa)
- R Ozu, Kurosawa, Stillness and Movement

Week 11 (Oct 30 to Nov 3)

- T Individual Meetings
 Due: Final Project Bibliography
- T Screening 11: "Night Train" (1936, Harry Watt and Basil Wright)
 "Ritual in Transfigured Time" (1946, Maya Deren)
 "Fireworks" (1947, Kenneth Anger)
 "Afrique 50" (1950, René Vautier)
 "Nuit et brouillard" / "Night and Fog" (1956, Alain Resnais)
- R Experimental and Documentary Film in the Sound Era
 Read: Film History, chap. 21 and Grierson, "First Principles of Documentary"

Week 12 (Nov 6 to Nov 10)

- T New Cinemas
 Due: Detail Analyses

T Screening 12: *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?* (1957, Frank Tashlin)

R Auteurism in Late Classical Hollywood

Week 13 (Nov 13 to Nov 17)

T Television and Cinema in the 1950s

T Screening 13: *Shadows* (1959, John Cassavetes), *Afrique sur Seine* (1955, Jacques Mélo Kane, Mamadou Sarr and Paulin Vieyra)

R American Independent Film and Postcolonial Cinema
Due: Final Project Draft

Week 14 (Nov 20 to Nov 24)

T Individual Meetings

T Screening 13: *Ajantrik* (1958, Ritwik Ghatak)

R No Class - Thanksgiving

Week 15 (Nov 27 to Dec 1)

T Project Discussion

T Screening 14: *Pyaasa / Thirst* (1957, Guru Dutt)

R Class Wrap-Up, Starting the Next Project

Week 16 (Dec 4 to Dec 8)

T Final Project Due
 Final Exam Due

Course Policies

Attendance:

Students must maintain good attendance throughout the semester. Students may miss up to 6 class sessions (inclusive of class and screening periods) without penalty. Each additional absence results in a one-third letter grade drop (i.e., a student who has a B+ who misses six class sessions will end the semester with a B). Please note that students arriving to class after roll has been called will not be added to the roll and are marked absent for the day.

Sexual Misconduct / Sexual Harassment Reporting:

USF is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. In compliance with Title IX and under USF System Policy, faculty must report incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes, including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic / relationship violence, to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSSR). This includes incidents disclosed in class, in papers, or in personal conversations with the instructor. The USF Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention (813-974-5757) is a confidential resource for students in need. It files reports with the OSSR and the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEEO) only at the request of students.

Late Work:

While exceptions might be made on a case-by-case basis, late papers or assignments will face grade-related penalties. Papers turned in after the due date (listed in the syllabus above) are docked a third of a letter grade for every day until they are turned in (so a paper that would earn an A would be reduced to an A- after a day, a B+ after the second, and so on). Students, however, are encouraged to turn in a late assignment rather than not turn anything in at all (even a 50% is better than a 0%).

Graded Materials:

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have the material and to make it available.

Classroom Behavior:

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own.

Plagiarism:

Students should familiarize themselves with the university's guidelines on academic integrity. Students are specifically reminded that plagiarism, which includes the use of others' words or ideas without proper attribution or the submission of the same assignment in two courses, is a serious academic offense. To help detect potential plagiarism, students will be asked to submit their assignments to turnitin.com. For more information on USF's policies, please consult the following link: <http://www.ugs.usf.edu/policy/AcademicIntegrityOfStudents.pdf>

Please note that plagiarized assignments will be automatically given a zero for the assignment and will be reported as an official violation of the student honor code. Please *also* note that plagiarism can be unintentional and covers uncited conceptual borrowing in addition to straight-up copy-and-pasting. So if your paper has content that's featured in a Khan Academy page, it doesn't matter if you have rewritten or restructured it, if the material isn't original or cited.

Plagiarized papers receive a 0/100 without exception.

Two words of advice:

- 1) Don't use the internet to work on assignments unless directed otherwise
- 2) Don't turn in a plagiarized assignment

Student Accessibility Services:

Students requiring enhanced access to services for disabilities or other reasons are responsible for registering with Student Accessibility Services in order to receive academic accommodations. SAS encourages students to notify instructors of accommodation needs at least 5 business days prior to needing the accommodation. A letter from SDS must accompany this request. For more information on USF's accommodations policy consult the following link: <http://www.asasd.usf.edu/Students.asp>

Incompletes:

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. An "I" grade may be awarded to a student only when a small portion of the student's work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade. The time limit for removing the "I" is to be set by the instructor of the course. For undergraduate students, this time limit may not exceed two academic semesters, whether or not the student is in residence, and/or graduation, whichever comes first. For graduate students, this time limit may not exceed one academic semester. "I" grades not removed by the end of the time limit will be changed to "IF" or "IU," whichever is appropriate.

Course Materials and Student Recordings:

Course materials may not be sold or licensed to sites like Coursehero. Any student who sells their materials to such sites will be reported to the university.

Per recent Florida legislation, students are permitted to record class lectures. These lectures, and any other course materials, are for individual use only and cannot be published online without the permission of the instructor. Please note that the legislation sets limits on what may be recorded and how those recordings can be used.

From the Provost's Office:

- [House Bill 233 Intellectual and Viewpoint Diversity Act](#) was recently signed into law by Governor DeSantis and will take effect on July 1, 2021. Accordingly, and because this law will take effect after the start of the *Summer B* session, USF will immediately implement the following internal protocols to provide students and instructors a consistent understanding of classroom expectations until additional guidance from the state is provided. Upon receipt of that additional guidance, the University will update these protocols as necessary. You may elect to include the following in your course syllabus:
 - Students with disabilities will continue to have appropriate accommodations for recordings as established by [SAS](#).
 - Students may record class lectures which will be considered instructor-delivered academic content. No recordings of other students, class participation, or discussion will be permitted.
 - Students do not need advance permission or to provide notice to record. But, students must monitor their recording so that it does not include participation by other students.
 - Students may not publish (post or share) the recordings except as provided by statute. In the event permission is requested to publish (post or share), the student's request and instructor's consent must be in writing.
 - Students and instructors are responsible for compliance with the statute and related potential sanctions. Misuse of the recordings may result in referrals as possible violations of the student code of conduct or considered academic disruptions.
 - Additional links for reference:
 - [House Bill 233 \(2021\): Postsecondary Education](#)
 - [USF Regulation 3.025](#), Disruption of Academic Process
 - [USF Regulation 6.0021](#), Student Code of Conduct

Appendix

Screening 1: Early cinema program (in screening order):

- clips of pre-cinema image technologies from *Media Magica: Film Before Film* (1985, Werner Nekes)

- Louis Le Prince
 - "Roundhay Garden Scene" (1888, Louis Le Prince)
 - "Traffic Crossing Leeds Bridge" (1889, Le Prince)

- Edison Films
 - "Monkeyshines, no. 1" "Monkeyshines, no. 2"
 - "Blacksmithing Scene" "The Barber Shop"
 - "Sandow" "Annie Oakley"
 - "The Boxing Cats," (1889-94, William K.L. Dickson and William Heise)
 - "The Kiss" (1896, Heise)
 - "Serpentine Dance" (1895, Dickson and Heise)
 - "The Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots" (1895, Alfred Clark and Heise)
 - "Dickson Experimental Sound Film" (1894-5, Dickson and Heise)

- Lumière Company (and some friends):
 - "La sortie de l'usine Lumière à Lyon" / "Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory" (1895, Auguste and Louis Lumière)
 - "Place du pont" (1897, Lumières)
 - non-Lumière actuality "Rough Sea at Dover" (1895, R.W. Paul)
 - "Repas de bébé" / "The Baby's Meal" (1895, Lumières)
 - "L'arrivé d'un train en gare de La Ciotat" / "The Train Arrives at La Ciotat Station" (1896, Lumières)
 - "La village de Namo: Panorama pris d'une chaise à porteurs" / "Village of Nemo: Panorama Taken from a Sedan Chair" (1900, Gabriel Veyre)
 - "Duel au pistolet" / "Pistol Duel" (1896, Veyre)
 - "Bataille de boules de neige" / "Snowball Fight" (1896, Lumières)
 - "Ouvriers réparant un trottoir en bitumen" / "Workers Repairing an Asphalt Sidewalk" (1897, Lumières)
 - "Démolition d'un mur" / "Demolition of a Wall" (1896, Lumières)
 - non-Lumière actuality: "Searching Ruins on Broadway for Dead Bodies, Galveston" (1900, Albert E. Smith)

- Early Narratives
 - "L'arroseur arrose" / "The Sprinkler Sprinkled" (1895, Lumières)
 - "The Lone Fisherman" (1896, Heise and James White)
 - "Les Cambrioleurs" / "The Burglars" (1898, Alice Guy)
 - "Surprise d'une maison au petit jour" / "Surprise Attack on a House at Daybreak" (1898, Guy)

- Experiments with Editing, Narrative
 - "Life of an American Fireman" (1903, Edwin S. Porter)
 - "The Great Train Robbery" (1903, Porter)
 - "Le voyage dans la lune" / "A Trip to the Moon" (1902, Georges Méliès)
 - "The Kiss in the Tunnel" (1899, G.A. Smith)

- "The Kiss in the Tunnel" (1899, James Bamforth)
- "Ladies' Skirts Nailed to a Fence" (1900, Bamforth)
- "The Biter Bit" (1900, Bamforth)
- "Let Me Dream Again" (1900, Smith)
- "Grandma's Reading Glass" (1900, Smith)
- "As Seen Through a Telescope" (1900, Smith)
- "Sick Kitten" (1903, Smith)
- "The Gay Shoe Clerk" (1903, Porter)
- "Mary Jane's Mishap" (1903, Smith)

- More Attractions, Spectacle
 - "How It Feels to Be Run Over" (1900, Cecil Hepworth)
 - "Explosion of a Motor Car" (1900, Hepworth)
 - "Danse serpentine" / "Serpentine Dance" (1900, Guy)
 - "Interior New York Subway" (1905, Billy Bitzer)
 - "Le Cochon Danseur" / "The Dancing Pig" (1906, ??)

- Self-Reflexive Early Films
 - "The Countryman and the Cinematograph" (1901, R.W. Paul)
 - "The Story the Biograph Told" (1904, Wallace McCutcheon)