

ENG 2300: Film Analysis (section 1809)

Class: Tues. Period 4 (10:40-11:30), Thurs. Period 4-5 (10:40-11:30 and 11:45-12:35)

Screening: Weds. Periods 9-11 (4:05-7:05)

Turlington 2322

Instructor: Peter Gitto

Email: peter.gitto@ufl.edu

Office: Turlington 4335

Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of ENG 2300 is to provide students with a working knowledge of film vocabulary within the context of film history and film theory. This course will allow you to begin your exploration of the field by watching, discussing, and writing about films, and by engaging in critical reading of major texts in film theory and criticism. By the end of this course, students will not only have a greater knowledge of how to talk about films, but also how to read, analyze, and think about films.

The course will emphasize narrative film. The course has a strong writing component and we will devote time to research and writing strategies; we will use a short guide "Writing about Movies" to address these issues.

This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. For more information, see:

<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-educationrequirement.aspx#learning>.

TEXTSRequired:

Barsam, Richard and Dave Monahan. *Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film*. 4th Ed. New York: Norton, 2012.

(Pack will include DVD tutorials [\(2 DVDs\)](#) and "Writing about Movies" guide)

Additional readings, [indicated on the syllabus](#), will be available via PDF on Sakai, under "Resources," and [most films will be available for second viewing on reserve at Library West](#).

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UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTSFinal Grade Appeals:

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant [in the Department of English](#). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

Statement of Composition (C) and Humanities (H) credit:

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-educationrequirement.aspx>

Statement of Writing requirement (WR):

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/gordon.aspx>

Statement of student disability services:

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement on harassment:

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Statement on academic honesty:

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

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.

Students who text during class will face attendance-related penalties.

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 and to make available this material.

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Missing class will not only put you behind in terms of course material, but will also deprive the class of your contributions to discussion. You may miss up to three class meetings and one film screening before your grade is affected. If you miss more classes, your final grade will be lowered one-third of a letter grade (from A- to B+, for example) for each additional absence. If you miss more than six class sessions, you fail the course automatically.

Use these absences wisely in case of extenuating circumstances. Illness or family difficulties do not excuse you from this policy. The only exemptions are for university-sponsored events and religious holidays. Please note, however, that you must discuss these absences with me in advance in order to avoid being marked absent.

WRITING REQUIREMENTS and OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

For this course, the University requires 6,000 words written formally (ie, in-class writing does not count). (300 words double spaced = about 1 page)

A hard copy of the paper is due at the beginning of class. You need to also upload your paper to Sakai BEFORE the beginning of class the day it is due.

Papers are to be typed; 12 pt. font; 1 inch margins; double spaced, pages numbered in upper right hand corner. STAPLED. Papers should have a title that indicates the film(s) to be discussed with an indication of your thesis. Papers should not be generically titled such as, "Formal Analysis Paper." Works Cited [lists](#) should be in MLA form, properly cited on a separate page. You should not take up excessive space on the first page; your name and the date in the heading is sufficient.

Writing Assignments

Formal Journal 15 pages total

You will keep a formal journal, that is, **the products will demonstrate highly polished writing**. You will be given some assignments throughout the semester, remaining pages may be used to think through topics of interest to you or those covered in class, or prepare for your final paper. They may be film reviews from films viewed in or outside of class, and/or engagement with class material. Assigned journal writing will be due periodically throughout the semester. Entries should be clearly titled to indicate assignment; topic covered; and indication of thesis. 7 pages of the journal will be assigned writing, the other 8 will be of your choice.

First journal assignment: 3 pages: closely analyze a scene from *The Rules of the Game*, *Vertigo*, or *Caché*: You will select an excerpt from the film (about 5-6 mins should be sufficient) in order to write 3 pages of analysis of the excerpt. What to include: discuss Editing, elements of Cinematography, such as camera movement and framing, and/or Mise-en-Scène (for example, actor movement).

Write about what is significant to the excerpt you have chosen. To start with, think about what particularly drew you to the scene/excerpt, and what and HOW formal elements are used to create it. Describe how the formal elements are displayed. How do formal elements compliment or relate to each other, for example, in *The Rules of the Game*, how does actor movement impel camera movement? Or, for example, how does the set or narrative inform framing?

Be sure write about how the significant formal elements you discuss relate to larger aspects of the film, such as themes, narrative, character development, ideology, or historical placement. Your writing should be focused and not rambling; discuss what is most relevant to your argument, even though the segment is short, don't include everything that happens within it. You should build an argument about how the formal elements function with or create content, or the implications of that content, such as ideology or historical placement (review form/content). Make sure you have an introduction and conclusion.

Final Paper 5 pages. Construct a solid argument discussing 1-3 films of your choice. Include discussion of some formal elements in your paper. Use 4 well-chosen academic sources. Start thinking about this paper early.

Quizzes: reading daily for class should be a habit.

There will be reading pop-quizzes. You must do the required reading thoroughly by the date it is due. The quizzes are to encourage regular, attentive reading. Quizzes may also cover something that was discussed previously in class. This is to encourage daily attentiveness and investment in the course.

In-Class Article Presentation

You will sign up and orally present on the reading for that day. You may use the chalkboard, or give a computer presentation, or handout, or just present orally—whatever works best for you. Most groups will collaborate on the readings; you can divide the text into parts that each of you will cover.

GRADING

Grade Meanings for Papers and shorter essays (such as on exams):

Your grade will depend on the quality of your analysis and the clarity and organization of your argumentation. Your grade will take into consideration the quality of the content of your paper, its organization and coherence, its argument and support, and its style and proper use of writing grammar and mechanics. Here is the meaning behind the grades I assign to your papers; you can use these statements to determine how you might work toward a higher grade:

A--You did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Please note that "originality and creativity" do not mean the bizarre, or the use of shortcuts or gimmicks that might suggest, but do not replace, hard work. Originality and creativity come through hard work, close analysis of films, rigor of thought, and augmentation and refinement of ideas. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors. An A paper will have a clear, concise, and original thesis supported by clearly articulated evidence from the film(s) and/or secondary sources.

B--You did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.

C--You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.

D--You did what the assignment asked of you at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and/or the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or uneven.

E--An E is usually reserved for people who don't do the work or don't come to class. However, if your work shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment or demonstrates that you put little effort in completing it, you will receive a failing grade.

Grade breakdown (total 100 pts)

Presentation on reading: 10

Tests and quizzes: 30

Verbal Participation, attentiveness, and attendance: 20

Writing: 40

(writing breakdown: Formal Journal: 25; Final Paper 15)

*Participation includes attendance, doing the assigned readings thoroughly and on time, watching the films attentively and critically, and contributing participation that enhances the quality of the class in discussions or otherwise.

Checklist for Papers

Quality of Content (What you're writing and why you're writing it)

Unique and Interesting Ideas (but not bizarre or gimmicky)

Strength of Overall Argument

Ideas show the **product** of your effort and rigor of your thinking

Organization of Argument (How you're writing it at the meta-level)

Elements of selected formal qualities in film(s) support argument

Selected formal qualities in films are linked to a larger meaning or reasoning

Good selection of and use of supporting evidence from film(s) and/or secondary sources

Clarity of thesis (or main argument)

Writing (How you're writing it at the micro-level)

Fluidity of Style (Is it relatively easy to read and understand your ideas?)

Grammar (Is it correct? Is writing free of typos/ spelling errors?)

Clarity of thought (at sentence level and at paragraph level)

Course Screening list (Fr, It, Gr, Ch)= films in French, Italian, German, or Chinese with English subtitles

The Rules of the Game, dir. Jean Renoir 1939 (Fr)

The Great Dictator, dir. Charlie Chaplin 1940

Vertigo, dir. Alfred Hitchcock 1958

Blow-Up, dir. Michelangelo Antonioni 1966

A Clockwork Orange, dir. Stanley Kubrick 1971

Germany, Pale Mother, dir. Helma Sanders-Brahms 1980 (Gr)

[*Cinema Paradiso \(director's cut\)*, dir. Giuseppe Tornatore \(1988\) \(It\)](#),

[*My Voyage to Italy*, dir. Martin Scorsese 1999 \(Eng, It\)](#)

The Hours, dir. Stephen Daldry 2002

Caché (Hidden), dir. Michael Haneke 2005 (Fr)

The Intruder, dir. Claire Denis 2005 (Fr)

Still Life, dir. Jia Zhangke 2006 (Ch)

The World, dir. Jia Zhangke 2004 (Ch)

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Deleted: *Django Unchained*, dir. Quentin Tarantino 2012

Formal Elements discussions/clips: *Juno*, *Moonrise Kingdom*, *I Am Love*, *Inglorious Basterds*, *Nouvelle Vague*, *Weekend* (Godard), *Coeurs (Private Fears in Public Places)*, *La Haine*, dir.

Mathieu Kassovitz 1995 (Fr).

Deleted: *Cinema Paradiso*

SCHEDULE: Dates are due dates. Although we will have due dates for the most important chapters of the textbook, please work through the DVD tutorials on your own (they are fun and very helpful in demonstrating concepts) and browse the rest of the textbook on parts we don't cover.

Week of Aug. 19 (no screening)

Aug 22 Thurs: Introduction; [trailer from *The Canyons*, "CinNOma"/post-cinema: the death of cinema?](#); see: <http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-canyons-2013>,

Read: Chapter 5, Mise-en-scène and precinema 415-421 and watch Ch 5 and Ch 1 (Juno) tutorial (DVD); also view *Moonrise Kingdom* trailer

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Week of Aug. 26/ Film: *The Rules of the Game*—mise-en-scène, deep focus

T: Read: *Formal Analysis* section starting on p. 14; *Form and Content* section starting on p. 28.

Watch: DVD Tutorial, Chapter 2

R: Read: André Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema" (sakai) PRES 2

Week of Sept. 2/ *Vertigo*—The Gaze

T: Read: Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (sakai) PRES 2

R: Read: Chapter 6: Cinematography and watch tutorial; shot types discuss *Vertigo*; trailer from *I Am Love* (intertextuality); Doisneau photo set

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Week of Sept. 9/ *Caché* (Hidden)—modern appropriations of the gaze, panopticon and video

T: Read: Michel Foucault, “Panopticism” [PRES 3](#)

R: Read: Peter Brunette, “Caché” and “The White Ribbon” from *Michael Haneke (Contemporary Film Directors)* (sakai); in class, excerpt from *La Haine*: dolly zoom & implications

Week of Sept. 16/ *The Great Dictator*—from silent to sound—the case of Charlie Chaplin

T: Read Chapter 8: Editing and Soviet Montage movement 427-430 and watch Ch.8 tutorial (includes clips from *Battleship Potemkin*)

R: Read: Overview of film history, silent period pp. 421-423; Classic Hollywood 430-434; Discuss film.

Week of Sept. 23/ *Blow-up* as allegory of film—the index, the still image

T: **Shot type quiz**; film analysis writing example: from Godard’s *Nouvelle Vague*, 1990

R: Read: Peter Brunette, “*Blow-Up*” from *The Films of Michelangelo Antonioni (Cambridge Film Classics)* [PRES 2](#)

Week of Sept. 30/ *Germany, Pale Mother*-- Distantiation, Personal History, Enigmatic Code

T: Read: McCormick, Richard. “Confronting German History: Melodrama, Distantiation, and Women’s Discourse in *Germany, Pale Mother*.” *Gender and German Cinema: Feminist Interventions*: Volume II: Berg, 1993. 185-206. (sakai) [PRES 2](#) **First Journal entry due; should be**

highly polished writing (analysis of *Rules of the Game*, *Vertigo*, or *Cache*)

R: Read: my notes on the film (sakai)

[Week of Oct. 7/ *Cinema Paradiso*—cinophilia](#)

T: Read 2 reviews of *Cinema Paradiso*:

<http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/cinema-paradiso-1990>

<http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/cinema-paradiso-the-new-version-2002>

R: Read Chapter 10 Film History; in class discuss [Cinema Paradiso](#)

Week of Oct. 14/ *My Voyage to Italy*—cinophilia, national cinema history

T: **Journal: 2 pages due on *The Great Dictator*, *Germany Pale Mother*, or *Blow-Up***

R: In class: complete second half of *My Voyage to Italy*

Week of Oct. 21/ *The Intruder*—haptic cinema

T: **journal: one page response due to *My Voyage in Italy* and/or *Cinema Paradiso*** [Review film terms, study my note handouts](#)

R: **Test on Chapters 5, 6, and 8 (Mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, early cinema).**

Read: “The Withdrawal of Touch: Denis, Nancy, and L’Intrus” by Laura McMahon ([Sakai](#)) [PRES 2](#)

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<http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/cinema-paradiso-1990> ¶
<http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/cinema-paradiso-the-new-version-2002> ¶

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Journal: 2 pages due on *The Great Dictator*, *Germany Pale Mother*, or *Blow-Up* ¶

R: Read Chapter 10 Film History;

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T: **Test on Chapters 5, 6, and 8 (Mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing, early cinema)** ¶
 R: Read Chapters 3 and 4: Types of Movies and Elements of Narrative ¶

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Week of Oct. 28/ *Still Life*—fiction and the documentary image

T: Introduce Jia Zhangke, contemporary China

R: Read: "Market Socialism and Its Discontent: Jia Zhangke's Cinematic Narrative of China's Transition in the Age of Global Capital" by Xudong Zhang. ([sakai](#)) PRES 2

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Week of Nov. 4/ *The World*—globalization and its discontentsT: Read: Bryan Henderson, "Toward a Non-Bourgeois Camera Style" Watch traffic scene from Godard, *Weekend* (youtube) PRES 2R: Read: "Facades: The New Beijing and the Unsettled Ecology of Jia Zhangke's *The World*" by Jerome Silbergeld (sakai) PRES 2Week of Nov. 11/ *A Clockwork Orange*—music and film, ethics and audience

T: Intro to music and film, adaptation

R: Discuss film, use of Beethoven; **Journal: 2 pages due** on Jia Zhangke's films, [Still Life](#), [The World](#), or [The Intruder](#).

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Deleted: , *Django Unchained*,Week of Nov. 18/ *The Hours*-- Music and Film, Narrative, Adaptation, Art & LifeT: Read: "Music, Silence" 383-289; [minimalist music \(sakai\)](#)In Class: discuss Philip Glass and the minimalist score, watch excerpt on Philip Glass [from The Hours](#)R: In Class: discuss continuity devices in *The Hours*, watch trailers to *Kundun* (Glass, the mandala, "The Cycle of Impermanence"), *The Draughtsman's Contract* (Nyman), *I Am Love* (Adams) **Formal Journals Due (all 15 pages)**

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Week of Nov. 25 (no screening)

T: In class: workshop on final papers;

W: **final paper due via Sakai**

R: Thanksgiving

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Week of Dec. 2 (no screening)T: in class: view ending of Resnais, *Coeurs*; dance scenes from Fellini, *La Dolce Vita*

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>>>So what is "The Canyons" about? According to Schrader, who partially financed the \$250,000 direct-to-VOD film through Kickstarter, its theme is "the death of cinema" (gorgeous photos of abandoned theaters punctuate the opening and closing credits). And if you think the movie is "cold and dead at the center," as one critic complained, that's precisely the point: "We set out to make a film that's cold and dead at the center." --Bruce Fretts, "Paul Schrader: Porn Again?" August 2, 2013.

<http://www.rogerebert.com/balder-and-dash/paul-schrader-porn-again>