

Instructor: Robert Ray

Office: 4217 Turlington

Office Hours: Tuesday: 3-4 PM; Thursday: 4-6 PM

Telephone: 294-2819

Email: robertbeverleyray@gmail.com

Class Meetings: Tuesday: 4:05-7:05 PM, Turlington 2334

Film Screenings: Wednesday: 7:20 PM, Turlington 2334

Textbooks (in order of use):

Schatz: *The Genius of the System*

Naremore: *Acting in the Cinema*

Duckworth: *The Having of Wonderful Ideas*

Wittgenstein: *The Blue and Brown Books*

Decker: *Music Makes Me: Fred Astaire and Jazz*

Croce: *The Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers Book* (if available)

Photocopies (marked *) available at Xerographics Copy Center (927 NW 13th Street, 375-0795)

Assignments and Grading:

I. 60% of the final grade will result from the following:

1. bi-weekly two-page papers responding to a question raised by the movie(s) or readings for that week
2. a final 10-page paper on a topic chosen from those provided

II. 40% of the final grade will result from the following:

1. brief, short-answer daily quizzes on reading assignments and films (lowest 20% dropped)
2. class participation
3. two oral presentations (each counts as three quiz grades, which cannot be dropped)
4. We will meet 12 times during the semester. You are allowed one unexcused absence. Each additional absence will cost 8 points off your final course grade.

Note: You must have an average of 90 on the written work to get an A or A- in the course.

In this course, we will examine the issue of movie stardom in Classic Hollywood, using as test cases Bing Crosby (the biggest box-office star of the 1940s) and Fred Astaire (the most important figure in the history of the musical). We will also take up the question of method by looking at several different approaches to analysis and teaching: the *Movie-Cavell* model of close-reading, the teaching strategies of Eleanor Duckworth (a student of Jean Piaget), Wittgenstein's Cambridge lectures of 1933-1934, and the surrealists' games and film-watching tactics. We will see several of the important Crosby movies and all of the best Astaire-Rogers films.

Aug. 27 (Tues.): **Thinking about Movie Stardom -- Garbo and Schmidt**

Schatz: *The Genius of the System*, pp. 3-124 (122 pages)

*Taylor: *The Principles of Scientific Management*, pp. 35-48, 59-64 (20 pages)

Sept. 3 (Tues.): **Acting in the Movies**

Naremore: *Acting in the Cinema*, pp. 1-96 (96 pages)

Klevan: *Film Performance*, "Preface," pp. 1-25, 103-105 (28 pages)

*King: "Articulating Stardom" (16 pages)

*Thompson: "Screen Acting and the Commutation Test" (15 pages)

Sept. 10 (Tues.): **Film Analysis – How to Begin**

*Klevan: "Notes on Teaching Film Style" (14 pages)

*Klevan: "Internalizing the Musical: *The Band Wagon* (1953)" (4 pages)

*Klevan: From "In-Between" (5 pages)

*Perkins: "Moments of Choice" (7 pages)

*Cavell and Klevan: "What Becomes of Thinking on Film?" (43 pages)

*Cavell: "A Capra Moment" (9 pages)

Sept. 17 (Tues.): **How to Pay Attention – Method I**

Duckworth: *The Having of Wonderful Ideas*, pp. 63-68, 132-135, 141-155, 173-185 (38 pages)

*Evans: "Wonder and the Clinical Encounter" (14 pages)

*Barthes: "The Third Meaning" (22 pages)

*Hammond: From *The Shadow and Its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on Cinema*, pp. 1-21 ("Off at a Tangent") (21 pages)

*"Surrealist Games" (2 pages)

Sept. 24 (Tues.): **How to Pay Attention – Method II: Wittgenstein**

Wittgenstein: *The Blue and Brown Books*, pp. 1-74 (74 pages)

Oct. 1 (Tues.): **Movie Stardom – Bing Crosby**

*Giddins: "Bing for the Millions" (8 pages)

*Giddins: "Going His Way (Bing Crosby)" (7 pages)

*Giddins: "The Neglected King of Swing (Bing Crosby)" (8 pages)

*Mast: *Can't Help Singin'*, pp. 223-225 (3 pages)

*Dick: "Crosby at Paramount" (11 pages)

*Fuchs: "A Couple of Song and Dance Men" (8 pages)

*Friedwald: "Conclusion: Bing Crosby – Architect of Twentieth-Century Style" (3 pages)

Oct. 8 (Tues.): **Movie Stardom – Fred Astaire I**

*Thomson: *The New Biographical Dictionary of Film*, "Fred Astaire" (3 pages)

*Mast: *Can't Help Singin'*, pp. 141-164 (24 pages)

*Harvey: *Romantic Comedy in Hollywood*, pp. 183-200 (18 pages)

*Mueller: *Astaire Dancing*, pp. 3-35 (33 pages)

Oct. 15 (Tues.): **Fred Astaire II**

Decker: *Music Makes Me: Fred Astaire and Jazz*, pp. 1-130, 173-191 (149 pages)

Oct. 22 (Tues.): **Swing Time** (1936: George Stevens; 103 minutes)

In-Class Film Screening

Oct. 29 (Tues.): **Fred Astaire III**

*Croce: *The Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers Book*, pages to be announced

Nov. 5 (Tues.): **Astaire and Crosby Together**

*Decker: "On the Scenic Route to *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn* (1942)" (34 pages)

Nov. 12 (Tues.): **The Book Musical – Meet Me in St. Louis**

*Naremore: *The Films of Vincente Minnelli*, pp. 71-89 (19 pages)

*Dyer: "Entertainment and Utopia" (12 pages)

Nov. 19 (Tues.): **TBA**

Nov. 26 (Tues.): **No Class – Thanksgiving Week**

Dec. 3 (Tues.): **TBA**

Film Screenings

Aug. 21 (Wed.): *Grand Hotel* (1932: Edmund Goulding; 113 minutes)

Aug. 28 (Wed.): *The Big Sleep* (1946: Howard Hawks, 114 minutes)

Sept. 4 (Wed.): *It Happened One Night* (1934: Frank Capra; 105 minutes)

Sept. 11 (Wed.): *Waikiki Wedding* (1937: Frank Tuttle; 89 minutes)
Sing, You Sinners (1938: Wesley Ruggles; 88 minutes)

Sept. 18 (Wed.): *Going My Way* (1944: Leo McCarey; 126 minutes)

Oct. 2 (Wed.): *The Gay Divorce* (1934: Mark Sandrich; 107 minutes)

Oct. 9 (Wed.): *Roberta* (1935: William A. Seiter; 106 minutes)
Top Hat (1935: Mark Sandrich; 99 minutes)

Oct. 16 (Wed.): *Follow the Fleet* (1936: Mark Sandrich; 110 minutes)

Oct. 23 (Wed.): *Shall We Dance* (1937: Mark Sandrich; 116 minutes)

Oct. 30 (Wed.): *Holiday Inn* (1942: Mark Sandrich; 101 minutes)

Nov. 6 (Wed.): *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944: Vincente Minnelli; 113 minutes)

Nov. 13 (Wed.): *High Society* (1956: Charles Walters; 107 minutes)