

ENG 6137 17AE

Theories of Film

Professor Maureen Turim

Office: 4330 TUR

392-1060, ext. 258

mturim@ufl.edu

office hours: M-W 3rd period

W 6-8 Seminar

Screenings:

M 9-11

Film theory has a long and complex history, which this course will examine. What did early film theorists mean by calling film the seventh art? How did theories of montage grow out of a particular historical moment to embrace an ideological transformation of the cinema? What are the various theories of realism in film, in conjunction with ontological arguments? How are those theories engaged ideologically? What did semiotics bring to film theory? How did psychoanalytical theories of film stem from investigations of identification and projection, dream and fantasy? How were they coupled with Marxist critiques at a particular historical juncture in the seventies? How did feminism and queer theory engage with these theories to question some of their premises, and enrich our theoretical understandings? How do philosophical approaches to film overlap with or differ from the project of film theory? How does film theory address history, race, and spectatorship? What do digital technologies demand of film theory? What is the project of contemporary film theory? I offer the course description as a series of questions, because film theory is always asking questions, fundamental questions about how film works. In this course we will look at how theorists have proposed to explore filmic epistemologies. Each week we will discuss a film that correlates with the theoretical approach to be investigated that week, for theory works alongside close visual and auditory analysis, framing the questions that help us more deeply understand film. While this course will be essential for any grad students preparing for careers in film studies that will include teaching film theory, it should also be useful to students of literature and creative writing who wish to think deeply about visual and auditory representation in relationship to writing. It will also be of great use to students in visual rhetoric.

Participants in the seminar will engage in class discussions and canvas postings that will lead to a diary project of their week-by-week thinking about the correlations between the films and the theoretical readings. At periodic junctures, these writings will be annotated. A final paper on a selected topic in film theory covered in the class will also be planned and written throughout the semester; each participant will have a chance to present a synopsis of their project to the class.

Ares reserve readings as listed: You should login using a proxy if you are off campus, and then use your gatorlink to login, then you will be able to download the readings as files. DVDs, video and books will also be available through library reserves.

CANVAS for the course will post the syllabus, assignments, and additional study material; the discussions will continue in the online forum as a significant aspect of your participation in the course.

The seminar will have several goals:

To understand both the history theories of film and the major ideas and debates that film theory entails.

To increase your skills in viewing and reading film, and in reading critical writing about film by framing that experience in theoretical questions.

To engage you in debates and discussion, and to stimulate you to think.

To help you write your best research papers

To help creative writers imagine the filmic form of creative expression and to think through the relationship of theory to practice of creative forms.

Course Requirements:

A final research paper of 15-20 pages, using theories and methods of theorizing and analysis of film covered in this course. There will be assignments of prospectus and outline as part of your preparation 70%

Participation in class discussion and online discussion, and additional assignments 30%. Bring printouts or downloaded copies of readings to class. You must read all assigned texts for the Tuesday class and alertly watch of all the films at the Monday screenings. Attendance will be taken at screenings. Creative Writing students may write a script instead of a paper, as long as it details camerawork for each shot explicitly, and includes a prose section discussing the relationship of the style of camerawork in the film to those films seen in the course.

Policies and Procedures:

Polite, Active Participation: On time attendance and participation in seminar discussion is essential. Students should attend all class screenings. Since discussions will critically evaluate readings and films, assigned texts must be read prior to seminar meetings.

Computers are permitted for note-taking only.

Films/Lectures: Normally, a feature length film will be screened each Monday evening, with lectures, discussion and clips from films in seminar on Tuesday.

Films as Texts: Your primary "texts" are the films themselves. All written materials, including the required books for the course, are secondary sources. No written description of any film can be assumed accurate unless confirmed by your own eyes. Learn to think visually and be able to rely on your own active viewing of the films.

Note-taking: Most films seen in class may be rescreened at the Library reserves; good notes are crucial for your ability to critically discuss and write about what you have seen. During or immediately after each film, learn to note specific shots and sequences, perhaps by diagramming action or editing patterns or sketching a shot composition. In your papers, work from your notes to develop arguments carefully, supported by specific examples from individual films.

Criteria: Your ability to speak and write clearly and effectively, as well as the strength of your theoretical and analytical argument, will be the basis for evaluating discussion and papers. You should use film terms and critical concepts properly and develop interpretive analyses. In addition, your own independent thinking is crucial; needless to say, plagiarism (the unacknowledged copying or paraphrasing of another's work) will be penalized severely. Your papers will be handed in using two formats: hard copy in class, as well as this file uploaded on Canvas. All assignments uploaded as files should be titled: Your Last Name ENG -18 Assignment name/number. For example: Stern ENG - 18 outline

Base your theoretical work on analysis of specific images and sounds in these films.

This syllabus is subj-ect to revisions that will be announced in class and on Canvas.

Wk	Day	
1	M 1/8	<i>The Searchers</i> , John Ford, 1956
	W 1/10	<p>Seminar introduction Discussion of the Sensory /Perceptual and Bodily Tendencies in Recent Film Theory and of the Overview of Metaphors in Film Theory</p> <p>Read: <i>Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses</i> Malte Hagener and Thomas Elsaesser (ebook on res) Introduction 1 Cinema as Window and Frame 2 Cinema as Door – Screen and Threshold</p>
2	M 1/15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day: no class
	W 1/17	<p>Eyes, Ears, Skin, Brain: But no Psyche Metaphors of Spectatorship and Representation Read: the remainder of <i>Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses</i></p> <p>3 Cinema as Mirror – Face and Close-Up 4 Cinema as Eye – Look and Gaze 5 Cinema as Skin – Body and Touch 6 Cinema as Ear – Acoustics and Space 7 Cinema as Brain – Mind and Body 8 Digital Cinema and Film Theory –The Body Digital</p>

3	M 1/22	<i>Behind the Screen</i> , Charlie Chaplin, 1916 <i>City Lights</i> , Charlie Chaplin, 1931
	W 1/24	Jean Epstein Le Cinématographe vu de l'Etna (1926) 287 Introduction / Stuart Liebman 287 The Cinema Seen from Etna 287 On Certain Characteristics of Photogénie 292 Langue d'Or 297 The Photogenic Element 299 For a New Avant-Garde 302 Amour de Charlot 305 Amour de Sessue 307 Jean Epstein Esprit de cinéma 330 The Logic of Images 330 Rapidity and Fatigue of the Homo spectatoris 333 Ciné-analysis, or Poetry in an Industrial Quantity 340 Dramaturgy in Space 345 Dramaturgy in Time 348 Visual Fabric 352 Pure Cinema and Sound Film 356 Seeing and Hearing Thought 359 The Counterpoint of Sound 362 The Close-up of Sound 365 The Delirium of a Machine 372 "Distance Is [Im]aterial: Epstein Versus Etna" 115 Jennifer Wild "The 'Microscope of Time': Slow Motion in Jean Epstein's Writings" 161 Ludovic Cortade
4	M 1/29	<i>L'Inhumaine</i> , Marcel L'Hebier, 1923
	W 1/31	Rudolf Arnheim, 'Film and Reality.' Film as Art. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1957. 8-34. "Rudolf Arnheim's Early Passage between Social and Aesthetic Film Criticism," <i>Eric Rentschler</i> "Rudolf Arnheim: Clarity, Simplicity, Balance," <i>David Bordwel</i> "Visual Thinking of the Avant-Garde Film," <i>Maureen Turim</i> "Ricciotto Canudo: Cinema Art Language," Paul Macovaz

5	M 2/5	<i>The Crowd</i> , King Vidor, 1928
	W 2/7	<p>Béla Balázs : Poetics and the Social</p> <p>‘Early Film Theory: Visible Man and The Spirit of Film’ ebook</p> <p>Chapter 1 - Visible Man</p> <p>Chapter 2 - Sketches for a Theory of Film</p> <p>Chapter 3 - Two Portraits</p> <p>Part II: The Spirit of Film</p> <p>Chapter 4 - Seven Years</p> <p>Chapter 5 - The Productive Camera</p> <p>Chapter 6 - The Close-up</p> <p>Chapter 7 - Set-up</p> <p>Chapter 8 - Montage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 - Montage Without Cutting • Chapter 10 - Flight from the Story • Chapter 11 - The Absolute Film • Chapter 12 - Colour Film and Other Possibilities • Chapter 13 - The Sound Film • Chapter 14 - Ideological Remarks <p>“The New Woman and the Ekphrastic Poetics of Béla Balázs,” Erica Carter</p>
6	M 2/12	<i>Paisan</i> , Rosellini. 1946
	W 2/14	<p>Bazinian Ontology</p> <p><i>What Is Cinema?</i> “The Ontology of the Photographic Image”</p> <p>The Evolution of the Language of Cinema”</p> <p>“The Virtues and Limitations of Montage”</p> <p>“Theater and Cinema — Part One”</p> <p>“Theater and Cinema — Part Two”</p> <p>André Bazin, “An Aesthetic of Reality: Neorealism”, <i>What Is Cinema? Volume II</i>, trans. Hugh Gray, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971</p>
7	M 2/19	<i>Dunkirk</i> , Christopher Nolan 2017 Scenes from <i>Inception</i> , Christopher Nolan
	W 2/21	<p>Mise-en-scene within Realism and Brechtian Counterpoints: Redemption of the Signifier?</p> <p>Dudley Arndew Herve Joubert-Laurencin, Opening Bazin Postwar Film Theory and its Afterlife</p> <p>Siegfried Kracauer, “Basic Concepts.” <i>Theory of Film: The Redemption of</i></p>

		<p>Physical Reality. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960. 27-40. <i>Cinema and Experience: Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin, and Theodor W. Adorno</i> Miriam Hansen ebook read Kracauer section. "Realism and the Cinema: Notes on Some Brechtian Theses' Colin McCabe <i>Bertolt Brecht, Cahiers du cinéma and Contemporary Film Theory</i>, George Ellis (selections) "Towards a Brechtian Criticism of Cinema," Bernard Dort</p>
8	M 2/26	<i>Pariah</i> , Dee Rees, 2011
	W 2/28	<p>Permutations of Feminist Gender Theory and Critical Race Theory: the gaze and desire revisited</p> <p>'Film and the Masquerade: Theorising the Female Spectator', (1982), Mary Ann Doane, 'White Privilege and Looking Relations: Race and Gender in Feminist Film Theory', in <i>Screen</i> 29 (4), 1988: 12-27. Jane Gaines, , 'Sexual Indifference and Lesbian Representation', in <i>Theatre Journal</i> 40 (2), 1988: 155-177., Teresa de Lauretis Is the Gaze Male? Ann Kaplan , 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' (1975), <i>Visual And Other Pleasures</i>. London: Macmillan, 1989: 14-26. EY, Laura Mulv , 'Afterthoughts on "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"', inspired by King Vidor's <i>Duel in the Sun</i> (1981), <i>Visual And Other Pleasures</i>. London: Macmillan, 1989: 29-37 Laura Mulvey "Women's cinema as counter-cinema," Claire Johnston</p>
	M 3/5	Spring break: no class
9	M 3/12	<i>October</i> , Eisenstein, 1929 Excerpt from <i>Kino Pravda</i> , Dzega Vertov
	W 3/14	<p>Montage Theories</p> <p>"Methods of Montage," Sergei Eisenstein "A Dialectic Approach to Film Form," Sergei Eisenstein "Synchronization of the Senses," Sergei Eisenstein <i>The Principles of Montage</i>, Lev Kulechov "Kino-eye, Dzega Vertov "On Montage, Vsevolod Pudovkin "The Third Meaning" Roland Barthes</p>

10	M 3/19	<i>Adieu Philippine</i> , Jacques Rozier, 1962
	W 3/21	Metz from the Grand Syntagmatic to the Imaginary Signifier New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics Part II and Part III Syntagmatic Analysis of the Image Track," Christian Metz 149-184 "Identification, Mirror," Christian Metz "The Modern Cinema and Narrativity," Christian Metz Selections from S/Z, Roland Barthes "Modernism and Semiology," David Rodowickc
11	M 3/26	<i>Pan's Labyrinth</i> , Guilermo del Toro, 2006
	W 3/28	Dreamwork, the Gaze, Suture, the Phallus, Desire, Foreclosure: the Unconscious "The Orthopsychic Subject: Film Theory and the Reception of Lacan," Joan Copjec "Looking Back at the Mirror," Maureen Turim "Film Body: an Implantation of Perversions," Linda Williams "Ellipses on Dread and Spectacular Seduction," Julia Kristeva "Suture," Kaja Silverman
12	M 4/2	<i>Inception</i> , Christopher Nolan, 2010
	W 4/4	Apparatus Theory and the Ideological Analysis of Film Form <i>Cinema against Spectacle</i> , Comolli "The Philosophy of Technology in the Frame of Film Theory: Walter Benjamin's Contribution," 29 Dominique Chateau "Cinema and Suture," Jean-Pierre Oudart
13	M 4/9	<i>La Guerre est finie</i> , Resnais, 1966
	W 4/11	Deleuze --Cinematic thought and the revival of Herni Bergson
		<i>Cinema II: The Time Image</i> Gilles Deleuze "The Action-Image: Large Form," Gilles Deleuze

14	M 4/16	Hollis Frampton Films: Lemon, Birth of Magellan, cadenza I., Magellan at the gates of death, part 1, the red gate 1, Nostalgia, Poetic Justice
	W 4/18	Energy, Traces, Flows "Acinema," Lyotard
		"The Unconscious as Mise-en-scence," Lyotard "Two Metamorphoses of the Seductive in Cinema," Lyotard "The Idea of a Sovereign Film," Lyotard <i>Abstraction in Avant-Garde Films</i> , Maureen Turim
15	M 4/23	<i>Orlando</i> , Sally Potter, 1992
	W 4/25	Counter-cinema meets the Spectacle: conclusions. "Elegy for Film Theory," David Rodowick

Final Paper Due 4/28