

ENGLIT 2451
Fall 2003
Lowenstein, A.

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FILM HISTORY/THEORY

ENGLIT 2451 (CRN 29915), Fall 2003, Thursdays 1-5pm, CL 444
Dr. Adam Lowenstein

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Course Description. What do we mean when we talk about "film studies"? Is it film history, in the sense of significant movements such as German Expressionism and Soviet Montage? Is it film theory, with its shifting conceptions of genre, authorship, stardom, reception, representation, and ideology? Or is it film analysis, the close reading of cinematic techniques of mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and sound? This graduate seminar assumes that film studies exists in tension between these areas, and that our goal as a class is to investigate their relations so that we might arrive at our own understanding of this complex discipline. No prior knowledge of film studies will be required, so the course will necessarily take shape as an intensive immersion experience -- film history, theory, and analysis will be engaged simultaneously, on multiple fronts. By the course's end, students will be prepared to pursue further graduate work in film studies, and to discuss crucial questions the discipline poses for related fields such as English, history, and cultural studies. Students with previous training in film studies will be encouraged to pursue advanced research projects under the supervision of the instructor. This course is required for the graduate certificate in Film Studies.

Course Requirements. 1. Active, vocal, engaged class participation. 2. A journal with short, typed, weekly entries focusing on analysis of each unit's readings, including questions and/or observations to raise in class and points of connection with previous films/readings/discussions. These journals should be brought to each class, as they may be collected periodically or shared with classmates. 3. An oral presentation designed to spark discussion of that particular week's unit by offering a fresh vantage point -- ideally by presenting a film clip and a hand-out guide to research you have conducted beyond that week's assigned material. 4. A short midterm paper. 5. A final research paper that applies the seminar issues to original areas of scholarly inquiry. Please note that all due dates are FIRM; extensions will not be granted. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890/412-383-7355 (TTY), as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Course Texts (available at the University of Pittsburgh Book Center and on Hillman reserve): The two-letter abbreviations following each title provide a key to their appearances in the seminar schedule. Texts without a two-letter abbreviation are recommended for further reading, but not required.

-- David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, sixth edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001) [BT]

-- Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, ed., *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, fifth

- edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) [BC]
 -- John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson, ed., *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) [HG]
 -- Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, ed. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995) [SK]
 -- Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, ed., *The Oxford History of World Cinema* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996)
 -- Philip Rosen, ed., *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986)
 -- Robert Stam and Toby Miller, ed., *Film and Theory: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000) [SM]
 -- Xeroxed articles on reserve in Crow Room [X]

Seminar Schedule

WEEK 1, AUG. 28 – INTRODUCING CINEMA: THEN AND NOW, NEW AND OLD
 Screening: *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1992, USA) 123m
 In-Class Writing Exercise

WEEK 2, SEPT. 4 – PRE-CLASSICAL, CLASSICAL, POST-CLASSICAL: ABSORPTION AND DISTRACTION

Screening: Assorted early cinema clips and short films
 Reading: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, "Film Production, Distribution, and Exhibition"; "Early Cinema"; "The Development of the Classical Hollywood Cinema"; and "The Classical Hollywood Cinema" [BT, 2-37; 400-402; 402-406; and 76-78]; Tom Gunning, "An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Film and the (In)Credulous Spectator" [BC]; Siegfried Kracauer, "Cult of Distraction" [SK]; Hugo Münsterberg, "The Means of the Photoplay" [BC]; Thomas Elsaesser, "Specularity and Engulfment: Francis Ford Coppola and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*" [X]

WEEK 3, SEPT. 11 – MISE-EN-SCENE AND MODERNISM

Screening: *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1919, Germany) 69m
 Reading: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, "The Shot: Mise-en-Scene" and "German Expressionism" [BT, 156-192 and 406-408]; Siegfried Kracauer, "Photography" [SK]; Erwin Panofsky, "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures" [BC]; Siegfried Kracauer, "*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*" [BC]

WEEK 4, SEPT. 18 – CINEMATOGRAPHY: CINEMATIC PRESENCE AND ABSENCE
 Screening: *Man With a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, 1928, USSR) 60m; *Un Chien andalou* (Luis Buñuel, 1929, France) 17m

Reading: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, "The Shot: Cinematography"; "Surrealism"; and "Soviet Montage" [BT, 193-248; 411-412; 412-415]; Siegfried Kracauer, "Film 1928" [SK]; Rudolf Arnheim, "The Complete Film"; "Film and Reality"; and "The Making of a Film" [BC]; André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" [BC]; Robert B. Ray, "Impressionism, Surrealism, and Film Theory" [HG]

WEEK 5, SEPT. 25 – EDITING: CONTINUITY, DISCONTINUITY, EVOLUTION

Screening: *Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925, USSR) 74m

Reading: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, “The Relation of Shot to Shot: Editing” [BT, 249-290]; Vsevolod Pudovkin, “On Editing” [BC]; Sergei Eisenstein, “The Dramaturgy of Film Form (The Dialectical Approach to Film Form)” [BC]; André Bazin, “The Evolution of the Language of Cinema” [BC]

WEEK 6, OCT. 2 – SOUND AND IMAGE, REPRODUCTION AND REALITY

Screening: *M* (Fritz Lang, 1931, Germany) 99m

Reading: David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, “Sound in the Cinema” [BT, 291-326]; Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” [BC]; Mary Ann Doane, “The Voice in the Cinema: The Articulation of Body and Space” [BC]; Michel Chion, “Projections of Sound on Image” [SM]

WEEK 7, OCT. 9 – HOLLYWOOD AS GENRE, OR GENRE VS. HOLLYWOOD?

Screening: *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942, USA) 102m

Reading: Douglas Gomery, “Hollywood as Industry” [HG]; E. Ann Kaplan, “Classical Hollywood Film and Melodrama” [HG]; Richard Maltby, “*Casablanca*” [HG]; Rick Altman, “*Casablanca*” [HG]; Tom Ryall, “Genre and Hollywood” [HG]

WEEK 8, OCT. 16 – REALISM AND/AS ART CINEMA

Screening: *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica, 1947, Italy) 90m

Reading: Simona Monticelli, “Italian Post-War Cinema and Neo-Realism” [HG]; André Bazin, “De Sica: Metteur-en-Scène” [BC]; David Bordwell, “The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice” [BC]; Stanley Cavell, “Photograph and Screen”; “Audience, Actor, and Star”; “Types; Cycles as Genres”; and “Ideas of Origin” [BC]

MID-TERM ESSAY DUE

WEEK 9, OCT. 23 – THE AUTEUR IN (AND OUTSIDE) THE FRENCH NEW WAVE

Screening: *Night and Fog* (Alain Resnais, 1955, France) 30m; *Eyes Without a Face* (Georges Franju, 1960, France) 88m

Reading: Julie Forbes, “The French Nouvelle Vague” [HG]; Stephen Crofts, “Authorship and Hollywood” [HG]; Andrew Sarris, “Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962” [BC]; Peter Wollen, “The Auteur Theory” [BC]; Dudley Andrew, “The Unauthorized Auteur Today” [SM]

WEEK 10, OCT. 30 – CINEMA AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

Screening: *Marnie* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1964, USA) 129m

Reading: Barbara Creed, “Film and Psychoanalysis” [HG]; Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” [BC]; Jean-Louis Baudry, “The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in the Cinema” [BC]; Christian Metz, “The Imaginary Signifier” [SM]

WEEK 11, NOV. 6 – BODY AND CINEMA

Screening: *The Act of Seeing With One's Own Eyes* (Stan Brakhage, 1971, USA) 32m; *Videodrome* (David Cronenberg, 1983, Canada) 90m

Reading: Linda Williams, "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess" [BC]; Richard Dyer, "Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society" [SM]; Siegfried Kracauer, "The Mass Ornament" [SK]; Stan Brakhage, "From *Metaphors on Vision*" [BC]

WEEK 12, NOV. 13 – RACE, POSTCOLONIALISM, THIRD CINEMA

Screening: *Xala* (Ousmane Sembene, 1974, Senegal) 123m

Reading: N. Frank Ukadike, "African Cinema" [HG]; Ashish Rajadhyaksha, "Realism, Modernism, and Post-Colonial Theory" [HG]; Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino, "Towards a Third Cinema" [SM]; Teshome H. Gabriel, "Towards a Critical Theory of Third World Films" [SM]; Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation" [SM]

WEEK 13, NOV. 20 – NATIONAL CINEMA AND (SUB)CULTURAL IDENTITY

Screening: *The Last Wave* (Peter Weir, 1977, Australia) 106m

Reading: Elizabeth Jacka, "Australian Cinema" [HG]; Stephen Crofts, "Concepts of National Cinema" [HG]; Toby Miller, "Hollywood and the World" [HG]

WEEK 14, NOV. 27 – ***THANKSGIVING***

WEEK 15, DEC. 4 – NORMS, DIFFERENCE, AND DISCIPLINARITY

Screening: *Office Killer* (Cindy Sherman, 1997, USA) 83m

Reading: Patricia White, "Feminism and Film" [HG]; David Bordwell, "Contemporary Film Studies and the Vicissitudes of Grand Theory" [X]; Bill Nichols, "Form Wars: The Political Unconscious of Formalist Theory" [X]

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE