

FTS 121: Film Theory
Fall 2006

Sec A: MWF 1:25-2:15pm LAFAYE L111

Sec B: MWF 2:30-3:20pm LAFAYE L200

Screening for both sections: Fri 3:30-6 WATERM 427

Professor: Hilary Neroni

Phone: 656-1356

Office Hours (Old Mill 311): Wed and Fri 9:30-11am

Course Description: This course will serve as a rigorous introduction to film theory. We will begin with the earliest attempts to theorize the cinema and move quickly to the film theory explosion of the 1960s and 1970s. The class will center on the theoretical underpinnings of this explosion—semiotics, psychoanalysis, Marxism, and feminism. We will investigate the thinkers that brought these different theoretical perspectives to bear on film. The course will conclude with two subject studies (on race in the cinema and on the filmmaker Kieslowski) through which we will investigate contemporary film theory.

Required Books (These books can be found to purchase in the University Bookstore, on line at Amazon or Barnes and Noble.com and to borrow on reserve at Bailey Howe Library):

Sigmund Freud's *On Dreams*

Patricia White's *Uninvited*

Leo Braudy, ed., *Film Theory and Criticism (FTC)*

Deleuze's *Cinema 1 and Cinema 2*

Grade Distribution:

Quizzes 25%

Paper 25%

Midterm exam 25%

Final Exam 25%

Assignments Descriptions:

Quizzes: Random quizzes will be given throughout the semester. These quizzes will be on the readings and screening assignments from the week within which they are given. Missed quizzes CANNOT be made up. I will drop the lowest quiz grades at the end of the semester.

Exams: The Midterm Exam will cover the first half of the course and the Final Exam will cover the second half of the course. Both exams will consist of short answer questions as well as essay questions. A review sheet will be distributed a week in advance of the exam.

Paper: The paper will ask you to engage with one of the film theories that we will be reading and one or several of the films we have watched or that you have chosen. A detailed handout with instructions and suggestions will be distributed in class.

Late Work: Papers turned in late will be lowered one grading step for each day that they are late.

Participation and Attendance: Since this class is primarily a discussion class, students should come to class prepared to participate. In order to be a quality participant in discussion, students should be very familiar with the reading by the time they get to class. I would recommend, if not rereading the assignment a couple of times, then at least a careful, deliberate reading. Without careful reading, you will not be able to be a viable member of the class.

Tentative Schedule:

Week One: Realism

Aug 28 Intro

Aug 30 FTC (Kracauer 143-153)

Sept 1 FTC (Bazin 41-53)

Screening: Dziga Vertov's *Chelovek kino-apparatom (Man with a movie camera)* (Soviet Union, 1929, 68min)
DVD 722

Week Two: Formalism

Sept 4: NO CLASS/LABOR DAY

Sept 6 FTC (Pudovkin 7-12; Eisentein 13-40)

Sept 8 FTC (Baudry 355-365)

Screening: David Lynch's *Eraserhead* (USA, 1977, 90 min) DVD 3828

Week Three: Semiotics and Structuralism

Sept 11 *FTC* (Metz 65-71)

Sept 13 *FTC* (Metz 72-86)

Sept 15 *FTC* (Barthes 589-591; Perez 592-597)

Screening: Carl Franklin's *Devil in a Blue Dress* (USA, 1998, 101 min) DVD 1224

Week Four: Narrative Theory

Sept 18 TBA

Sept 20 *FTC* (Gunning 470-481)

Sept 22 *FTC* (Thompson 513-524; Sconce 534-553)

Screening: Kieslowski's *Trois Couleurs: Blue* (Poland/France, 1993, 100 min) VIDR 303 & DVD 2077

Week Five: Psychoanalysis

Sept 25 Freud's *On Dreams*

Sept 27 Freud's *On Dreams*

Sept 29 Freud's *On Dreams*

Screening: Kieslowski's *Trois Couleurs: Blanc* (Poland/France, 1994, 91 min) VIDR 305& DVD 2077

Week Six: Psychoanalysis and Cinema: The Case of Kieslowski

Oct 2 Slavoj Zizek's *Fright of Real Tears*

Oct 4 Slavoj Zizek's *Fright of Real Tears*

Oct 6 Slavoj Zizek's *Fright of Real Tears*

Screening: Kieslowski's *Trois Couleurs: Rouge* (Poland/France, 1995, 99 min) VIDR 304& DVD 2077

Week Seven: Psychoanalysis and Cinema: The Case of Kieslowski

Oct 9 Slavoj Zizek's *Fright of Real Tears*

Oct 11 Film Festival (details provided in class)

Oct 13 ***Midterm exam**

Screening: Howard Hawk's *To Have and Have Not* (USA, 1945, 101 min) VID 4220

Week Eight: Feminist Film Theory

Oct 16 FTC (Mulvey 837-848)

Oct 18 FTC (Doane 373-385; Modleski 849-861)

Oct 20 FTC (Diawara 892-900)

Screening: Laura Mulvey's *Riddles of the Sphinx* (UK, 1977, 92min) VID 7766

Week Nine: Queer Theory

Oct 23 Patricia White's *Uninvited*

Oct 25 Patricia White's *Uninvited*

Oct 27 Patricia White's *Uninvited*

Screening: Robert Wise's *The Haunting* (USA, 1963, 112 min) DVD 2473

Week Ten: Queer Theory

Oct 30 Patricia White's *Uninvited*

Nov 1 Patricia White's *Uninvited*

Nov 3 Patricia White's *Uninvited*

Screening: Joseph Mankiewicz's *All About Eve* (USA, 1950, 138 min) DVD 602

Week Eleven: Deleuze

Nov 6 Deleuze's *Cinema 1*

Nov 8 Deleuze's *Cinema 1*

Nov 10 Deleuze's *Cinema 1*

Screening: Julie Dash's *Illusions* (USA, 1982, 34 min) VID 4543; *Daughters of the Dust* (USA, 1991, 112 min) DVD 1223

Week Twelve: Deleuze

Nov 13 Deleuze's *Cinema 1*

Nov 15 Deleuze's *Cinema 1*

Nov 17 Deleuze's *Cinema 1*

Screening: Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (USA, 1963, 120 min) DVD 373

Week Thirteen: Thanksgiving Recess (Nov 20- 24)

Week Fourteen: Deleuze

Nov 27 Deleuze's *Cinema 2*

Nov 29 Deleuze's *Cinema 2*

Dec 1 Deleuze's *Cinema 2*

Screening: Eric Romer's *Ma nuit chez Maud (My night with Maud)* (France, 1968, 111min) DVD 939

Week Fifteen: Deleuze

Dec 4 Deleuze's *Cinema 2*

Dec 6 * **Paper Due**

Final Exams:

Section A: 03:30 PM - 06:30 PM, Thursday Dec, 14 2006; LAFAYE L111

Section B: 11:45 AM - 02:45 PM, Friday Dec, 15 2006; LAFAYE L200