

AP HUMA 2670 6.0

Film and Literature (Y17-18, TR 16:00-17:30; T DB 0013, R DB 0015)

Course Instructor

Susan Ingram

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Office Hour: T 15:00-16:00 by appointment (singram@yorku.ca)

Course Description

As new technologies and social media increasingly mediate and shape our lived realities, the contemporary value and historical status of literature and film become increasingly topical. The novel and cinema are repeatedly declared “dead,” yet both enjoy greater popularity than ever. This course in Comparative Media Studies introduces students to the social, cultural, historical and aesthetic aspects of literature and film. It examines literature and film from the perspective of cultural history in order to make sense of both as media that came into being at particular historical moments and that continue to reinvent themselves in the wake of social and technological change.

The course emphasizes qualitative methods widely used and debated within interdisciplinary Humanities and focuses on practical exercises, from the formulation and clear expression of arguments and the identification of relevant research material to the presentation of research, interpretations and analysis both orally and in writing. A participatory seminar course rather than a lecture course, students will be encouraged to engage both in and out of class as well as online.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- articulate a solid understanding of the conditions under which literature and film emerged as media and the factors that have shaped their development
- explain and give examples of key concepts in literary, cinema, and media studies
- formulate cogent comparisons for a range of relevant aspects of both media (such as origins, relation to modernity, authorship, awards, etc.)
- distinguish between description, evaluation, explanation, and analysis
- conduct research independently
- enhance their academic reading, writing and research skills

Evaluation

- **Contributions (25%):**
Each week students will be asked to post short assignments on the Moodle and come to class prepared to discuss both the readings and the Moodle material (it is very important to have the readings with you in class).
- **Writing Assignment 1:** annotated bibliographical entries in MLA formatting for 5 of our readings, 300 words each, **due Tues Oct 31 (10%)**
- **In Class Midterm Exam, Thurs 30 Nov (20%)**
- **Writing Assignment 2:** a skeleton (introduction with thesis statement and road map, topic sentences + quotes for the body paragraphs, 10-item bibliography) for an original essay relating a novel written before 1889 or a film made before 1950 to either Guillory's media concept or the question of whether literature/ film is dead, **due Tues 27 Feb (20%)**
- **Final Reflective Essay:** compare film and literature on the basis of our course materials: 1500-2000 words, **due in the last class, Thurs 5 Apr (25%)**

Required Readings will be provided as links or pdfs on our **Moodle** site: **moodle.yorku.ca**. Registered students are automatically enrolled in the system. There you can also find the syllabus, announcements, useful links and a calendar to remind you of important due dates.

Schedule

7 Sept: Introductions

12-14 Sept: Where We Are Now: Methodological Considerations

- Self, Will. "The Novel Is Dead (This Time It's For Real)." *The Guardian* 2 May 2014
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/may/02/will-self-novel-dead-literary-fiction>
- Belton, John. "If Film Is Dead, What Is Cinema?" *Screen* 55.4 (2014): 460-470.
- Schalbe, Will. "The Need to Read." *The Wall Street Journal* 25 Nov. 2016
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-need-to-read-1480083086>
- Sperling, Joshua, and Daniel Fairfax. "Discovering Cinema in the Digital Age: A Roundtable with Dudley Andrew." *MUBI* 20 Apr. 2014
<https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/discovering-cinema-in-the-digital-age-a-roundtable-with-dudley-andrew>

19-21 Sept: What is Literature? What is Film?

- Williams, Raymond. "Literature" and "Culture." *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Fontana, 1981. 183-188.
- Bordwell, David, and Kristen Thompson. "Film as Art: Creativity, Technology, and Business." *Film Art: An Introduction*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2008. 2-53.

26-28 Sept: Antiquity: Reading and Writing

- Goldhill, Simon, "Literary History without Literature: Reading Practices in the Ancient World." *Debating World Literature*. Ed. Christopher Pendergast. London and New York: Verso, 2004. 175-196.
- Said, Suzanne. "Homer, or How to Create a World Writer." *Foundational Texts of World Literature*. Ed. Dominique Jullien. New York et al: Peter Lang, 2011. 29-46.

3-5 Oct: Antiquity: Reading and Singing

- Lord, Albert B. "Introduction." *The Singer of Tales*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: Harvard UP, 2000. 3-12.
- Homer, Book 1, *The Odyssey* (on Project Muse: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1727/1727-h/1727-h.htm#link2H_4_0003)

10-12 Oct: Authors vs Auteurs

- Bennett, Andrew, and Nicholas Royle. "The Author." *An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory*. 4th ed. Harlow, England: Pearson, Longman, 2009. 19-27.
- Wollen, Peter. "The Auteur Theory." *Signs and Meanings in the Cinema*. 3rd ed. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1972. 74-115.
- Grant, Catherine. "www.auteur.com?" *Screen* 41.1 (Spring 2000): 101-108.

17-19 Oct: Readers vs Spectators

- Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." *Image, Music, Text*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977. 142-148.
- Azoula, Ariella. "The Spectator is Called to Take Part." *The Civic Contract of Photography*. New York: Zone Books, 2008. 137-186.

24 Oct: Review for Assignment 1

26 Oct: FALL READING DAY

31 Oct, 2 Nov: The Rise of the Novel – Assignment 1 due

- Watt, Ian. "The Reading Public and the Rise of the Novel." *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. Berkeley: U California P, 1957. 35-59.

7-9 Nov: The Emergence of Literary Studies and Popular Culture

- Barry, Peter. "Theory before 'Theory' – Liberal Humanism." *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 3rd ed. Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2009. 11-37.
- Fluck, Winfried. "Emergence or Collapse of Cultural Hierarchy? American Popular Culture Seen from Abroad." *Popular Culture in the United States*. Eds. P. Freese and M. Porsche. Essen: Die Blaue Eule, 1994. 49-74.

14-16 Nov: Film History

- Barsam, Richard and Dave Monahan. "Film History." *Looking at Movies: An Introduction*. 3rd ed. New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010. 412-457.
- Elsaesser, Thomas. "Early Film History and Multi-Media: An Archaeology of Possible Futures?" *New Media, Old Media: A History and Theory Reader*. Eds. Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Thomas Keenan. New York: Routledge, 2006. 13-25.

21-23 Nov: Technologizing Writing

- Kittler, Friedrich A. "Typewriter." *Gramophone, Typewriter, Film*. Translated, with an Introduction, by Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz. Stanford, California: Stanford UP, 1999. 183-163.

28-Nov: Review

30 Nov: In Class Midterm

HOLIDAY BREAK

4 Jan: Review of the Midterm, Introduction to WS

9-11 Jan: Genesis of the Media Concept

- John Guillory, "Genesis of the Media Concept"

16-18 Jan: What Cinema Is – Modernity

- Miriam Hansen, "Vernacular Modernity"

23-25 Jan: *modernité* in Literature

- Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life"

30 Jan, 1 Feb: Translation

- David Damrosch, "Reading in Translation"

6-8 Feb: Adaptation

- Linda Hutcheon, from *A Theory of Adaptation*
- Julian Peters, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by T.S. Eliot as a comic

13-15 Feb: World Literature vs World Cinema

- Gloria Fisk, "Against World Literature: The Debate in Retrospect."
- Dudley Andrew, "An Atlas of World Cinema"

READING WEEK

27 Feb, 1 Mar: Judgment in Theory

- Morris B. Holbrook, Popular Appeal Versus Expert Judgments of Motion Pictures
- James F. English, "Winning the Culture Game: Prizes, Awards, and the Rules of Art"

6-8 Mar: Judgment in Practice 1: Literary Awards

- Horace Engdahl, "Canonization and World Literature: The Nobel Experience"
- Anthony Barnett, "John Berger and the Booker Prize"

13-15 Mar: Judgment in Practice 2: Film Awards

- Annie Proulx, "Blood on the Red Carpet"
- Donna Murch, "The Prison of Popular Culture: Rethinking the Seventy-Fourth Annual Academy Awards"

20-22 Mar: Convergence Culture

- Henry Jenkins, "Transmedia 101" and "Transmedia 202: Further Reflections"

27-29 Mar: Where Do We Go From Here?

- Sarah Brouillette, "On the African Literary Hustle"

3-5 Apr: Review

- final reflection due in class 5 April