

MFCO 201: History of Film

Please note: the following is a shortened example of a course outline as it has been taught in past years. As such it is **indicative only**; the assessment and schedule may change. If you require any further information please contact the department: mfco@otago.ac.nz.

Introduction

This paper provides an introductory survey of film history from beginnings of the film industry in the late 19th century to the present day, concentrating on narrative feature films.

The overall organization of the paper is chronological, though explorations of individual topics (e.g., Japanese cinema, Iranian cinema) may range across historical periods. The paper will examine a wide variety of topics in international film history, including: international “popular” film industries and practices, as in Japan and Australia, but in particular Hollywood (including how and why Hollywood has been a dominant force in international cinema since the 1920s); some of the most significant “alternative” narrative cinemas and film movements, including Soviet Montage cinema, German Expressionist cinema, Italian Neo-Realism, the French New Wave, and contemporary Iranian cinema; and the complex interactions between popular and alternative cinemas in the global context.

The paper aims to analyze some of the most widely influential developments in the history of cinema, and will bring together aspects of aesthetic, social, industrial, and technological histories. This will provide a solid foundation for further study of film and media practices in a variety of cultures, contexts, and historical periods.

Aims and Objectives:

By the end of this paper, you should be able to:

- Describe major developments in the history of cinema
- Understand international cinematic practices in their historical contexts
- Analyze film and history using a range of methods, including aesthetic, social, economic, and technological histories
- Understand key theoretical and methodological issues raised by the study of film history

This paper is designed to enhance the following skills:

- Independent research
- Written presentation of ideas
- Film analysis
- Critical engagement with complex arguments

Course Assessment:

Tutorial Participation	5%	(including pop quizzes)
Empirical Quiz	10%	To be administered online week 5 (6-10 August)
Research Exercise	15%	Friday 24 August, 4 p.m. (Week 7)
Research Essay	25%	Friday 28 September, 4 p.m. (Week 11)
Final Examination	45%	

MFCO 201 Semester 2, 2018

Dates	Topic	Screening	Lecture Reading	Tutorial Reading	Assignments
Week 1 9 July	Introduction and Early Cinema	<i>Way Down East</i> (Griffith, 1920)	Thompson and Bordwell, Introduction, Ch. 1-2 Bordwell, "Doing Film History"	Allen and Gomery, "Researching Film History" Corrigan, "Six Approaches to Writing About Film" Corrigan, "Researching the Movies" (recommended; on reserve)	NOTE: This screening may run slightly over the scheduled time.
Week 2 16 July	German Expressionist Cinema	<i>The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</i> (Wiene, 1919) <i>Nosferatu</i> (Murnau, 1922)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 5	Elsaesser, "Caligari's Family"	NOTE: This screening may run slightly over the scheduled time.
Week 3 23 July	Early Soviet Cinema Guest lecturer: Andy Barratt	<i>Mother</i> (Pudovkin, 1925)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 6	Thompson, "Early Alternatives to the Hollywood Mode of Production" Eisenstein, "The Montage of Film Attractions"	
Week 4 30 July	Classical Hollywood 1: 1920s	<i>The Gold Rush</i> (Chaplin, 1925) <i>Seven Chances</i> (Keaton, 1925)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 3, Ch. 7		
Week 5 6 August	Classical Hollywood 2: 1930s-1940s	<i>To Have and Have Not</i> (Hawks, 1945)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 9 pp. 177-184, Ch. 10	Ray, "A Certain Tendency of the American Cinema" Sarris, "Toward a Theory of Film History", "Howard Hawks"	Empirical Quiz
Week 6 13 August	Classical Hollywood 3: Post-1948	<i>Kiss Me Deadly</i> (Aldrich, 1955)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 15	Schrader, "Notes on <i>Film Noir</i> " Bordwell, "The case of <i>film noir</i> "	
Week 7 20 August	Japanese Cinema	<i>The Life of Oharu</i> (Mizoguchi, 1952)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 11 pp. 226-235, Ch. 18 pp. 358-363, Ch. 20 pp. 432-434, Ch. 27 pp. 632-637	NO TUTORIAL	Research Exercise Due 4:00pm 24 August

Mid-Semester Break, 27 August- 1 September

Week 8 3 September	Italian Neo-Realism	<i>Bicycle Thieves</i> (DeSica, 1948)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 16	Bazin, "An Aesthetic of Reality" Thompson, "Realism in the Cinema: <i>Bicycle Thieves</i> "	
Week 9 10 September	The French New Wave	<i>Pierrot le fou</i> (Godard, 1965)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 19 pp. 381-383, Ch. 20	Neupert, "Cultural Contexts: Where Did the Wave Begin?" Wollen, "Godard and Counter-Cinema: <i>Vent D'Est</i> "	

Week 10 17 September	Iranian Cinema	<i>A Separation</i> (Farhadi, 2011)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 26 pp. 608-611, Ch. 29 pp. 706-709 Naficy, "Islamizing Film Culture in Iran" Farahmand, "Perspectives on Recent (International Acclaim for) Iranian Cinema"	NO TUTORIAL	
Week 11 24 September	Australian Cinema Guest lecturer: Brett Nicholls	Screening TBA	Walsh "The Film Exhibitors' Royal Commission", Groves, "Year Zero for Australian Cinema", Sheckels, "Australian Film in the Australian Literature Classroom"	NO TUTORIAL	Essay Due 4:00pm 28 September
Week 12 1 st October	New Hollywood 1	<i>Raging Bull</i> (Scorsese, 1980)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 22	Thomas Schatz, "The New Hollywood" Richard Maltby, "Nobody Knows Everything" Matt Hickey, "The 11 Defining Features of the Summer Blockbuster"	
Week 13 8 October	New Hollywood 2	<i>Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind</i> (Gondry, 2004)	Thompson and Bordwell, Ch. 28, Ch. 29 pp. 694-702, Ch. 30	Andrew, "Film and History"	