EXPRESSIVE CULTURE: Film
[V55.0750]  
FALL 2005

Professor: Bill Simon  
Office Hours: Monday, 10:00-12:00  
room 644, 721 Broadway

Preceptors: Cindy Chen  
Juan Monroy  
Kimberley Monteyne  
TBA

Course Syllabus

Course Requirements:

* 3 brief (1-page) response essays  
* 2 brief (3-page) essays  
* 1 Mid-Term essay exam  
* 1 Final essay take-home exam (8-10 pages)  
* Class participation

Grade Distribution:

10%  
20%  
20%  
40%  
10%

Course Policies:

Attendance to all lectures and recitation sections is mandatory. We will take attendance in each class, and three or more unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your grade.

All work must be handed in on time except in the case of serious illness, medical emergency, or some other compelling mitigating circumstances. Failure to hand in work on time will result in the lowering of your grade. Incomplete grades and extensions will not be given without documented evidence of hardship (e.g., medical problems).

Plagiarism (quoting, presenting, or paraphrasing someone else’s ideas as if they were your own without appropriate footnote and bibliographic citation) will result in a grade of F.

Educational Objectives:

This course will examine a certain tendency in American narrative cinema during the 1960s and in the first half of the 1970s. This tendency can be generally defined as putting into dialogue two characteristics: 1) innovation in narrative structure and the use of genre; and 2) a critical perspective towards aspects of American culture and politics. The course is designed to provide an introduction to film as an art form and as an instance of cultural production as
well as a case-study for understanding film in relation to historical, political, social and cultural discourses. In pursuing the study of film in this manner, the course proposes a central methodology for understanding film as well as other artistic and cultural products. The introductory function of the course includes developing an understanding of the specificity of film form and style and the critical vocabulary we use to understand film form, style, and narration.

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The following book is required for the course and is available for purchase at the N.Y.U. Bookstore, 18 Washington Place:

Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White, The Film Experience: an Introduction (Boston: Bedford / St. Martin’s, 2004).

All other readings listed below are available in a photocopy packet available for purchase at Unique Copy Center, 252 Greene Street (between Waverly Place and 8th Street). These readings will also be available on Reserve at Bobst Library.

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Course Schedule

September 7: Introduction to Course Subject Matter and Methodology

Film: Psycho (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)

Readings:


- For recitation sections on September 8 & 9:

Corrigan and White, pp. 110-165, 348-352

Continued on next page
September 14:
The Cold War and the Arms Race

Film:
*Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (Stanley Kubrick, 1964)

Readings:


- For recitation sections on September 15 & 16:

Corrigan and White, pp. 213-256, 41-74

September 21:
Outlaws, Violence, and Radical Chic

Film:
*Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, 1967)

Readings:


- For recitation sections on September 22 & 23:

Corrigan and White, pp. 288-298, 310-312, 358-364, 140-143, 372

Assignment: Response essay

Continued on next page
September 28: The Western and the Vietnam War

**Film:** *The Wild Bunch* (Sam Peckinpah, 1968)

**Readings:**

- For recitation sections on September 29 & 30:
  
  Corrigan and White, pp. 75-109, 315-323, 301-304, 325-326

**Assignment:** Response essay

October 5: Space, Evolution, and Radical Narrative

**Film:** *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968)

**Readings:**

- For Recitation Sections on October 6 & 7:
  
  Corrigan and White, pp. 166-211

**Assignment:** 3-page essay

October 12: Normalcy and Monsters

**Film:** *Night of the Living Dead* (George Romero, 1968)


- For recitation sections on October 13 & 14:

Corrigan and White, pp. 304-306, 308-310, 320-322

October 19: Chicago 1968

Film: Medium Cool (Haskell Wexler, 1969)

Readings: Patterson, pp. 690-709.


- For recitation sections on October 20 & 21:

Corrigan and White, pp. 257-287

Assignment: Midterm: 3-page essay

October 26: The Mafia and Post-War America

Film: The Godfather, Part One (Francis Ford Coppola, 1972)


• For recitation sections on October 27 & 28:

Corrigan and White, pp. 310-312

November 2:

The Outlaw Couple

Film:  
*Baddlands* (Terence Malick, 1973)

Readings:


• For recitation sections on November 3 & 4:

Corrigan and White, pp. 318-319, 184-190

Assignment: Response essay

November 9:

Private Eyes and Capitalism

Film:  
*Chinatown* (Roman Polanski, 1974)

Readings:


• For recitation sections on November 10 & 11:

Corrigan and White, pp. 313-314

Continued on next page
November 16:

Film: The Conversation (Francis Ford Coppola, 1974).


Ryan and Kellner, pp. 95-105.

- For recitation sections on November 17 & 18:

Corrigan and White, pp. 207-209

Assignment: 3-page essay

November 23:

Thanksgiving: No Classes This Week

November 30:

Paranoia and Conspiracy II

Film: The Parallax View (Alan J. Pakula, 1974)


December 7:

Assassination Complex, I

Film: Taxi Driver (Martin Scorsese, 1976)


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- For recitation section on December 8 & 9:

  Corrigan and White pp. 358-362

**December 14:** Assassination Complex, II

**Film:** *Nashville* (Robert Altman, 1975)

**Readings:**

"Robert Altman Seminar." *Dialogue on Film* vol. 4, no. 5, American Film Institute, pp. 2-24.


Corrigan and White, pp. 306-308, 176-177

- No recitation sections will be held this week.

**Assignment:** Final take-home essay exam (8-10 pages)

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