

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
FALL 2018

LSHV 422-01 CINEMA AND AMERICAN VALUES CRN 12851 ROOM: ICC
SEPTEMBER 5–DECEMBER 6, 2016, WEDNESDAYS 6:30-9:30pm
PROFESSOR PERCY NORTH (northp@georgetown.edu)

This course will address major issues and ideas that characterize the revolutionary nature of American cinema from its beginning in the early 20th century to the present. Methods will be introduced for approaching the study of cinematic art as cultural history. Seminal works will be examined in the context of historical events as key texts for the interpretation of cultural values. Each class will include an historical introduction, a student presentation, and a discussion of the cultural values in the film viewed.

COURSE EVALUATION: Grades will be based on class participation and presentation, blogs, and essays. Each of the four sections will receive equal weight (25% each). Attendance and participation in all class discussions is, therefore, crucial.

FILM BLOG: This will consist of an analysis of the cultural values that you perceive in the films seen in class compared with another film from the same period.. Your analysis should include at least four pages per discussion and include information from the class reading. The last entry should include a summation tracing a recurrent theme.

ESSAY: Each student is required to write a research paper of 20 to 30 pages on a recurrent theme in American cinema. In the paper the student will explore the meaning of the theme and the way that it has evolved through the 20th century. You will need to choose a selection of films that illustrate your central theme, citing their public reception, and representation of cultural values. Explain how the cultural values reflect the ethos of each decade. Watch as many films as possible that support your theme.. A list of possible choices for paper topics is appended.

CLASS PRESENTATION: Each student will give a brief 15 minute (maximum) discussion of major social issues concerning a decade of your choice. The dates for these will be established at the beginning of the first class.

ALL PAPERS ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 6, 2018.

HONOR CODE

MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor Code Pledge stated below:

In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor system: To be honest in any academic endeavor: and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

DISABILITIES STATEMENT:

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

TEXTS: Braudy, L. & Cohen, M. *Film Theory, & Criticism*, (Oxford U. Press), 7th edition, 2009
Cook, D. *History of Narrative Film*, (Norton), 5th edition, 2016.
Feankel, G. *High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic*, (Bloomsbury), 2017.
Lang, R. *The Birth of a Nation*, (Rutgers), 1993.
Naremore, J. *Orson Welles's Citizen Kane: A Casebook*, (Oxford U. Press), 2004.
Sklar, R. *Movie-Made America*, (Knopf/Vintage), 1994.

LECTURE SCHEDULE: VIEWING AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

SEPTEMBER 5: INTRODUCTION: THE SILENTS

From “flickers” to bourgeois entertainment

FILMS: *THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY*, E.S. Porter, 1903

READING: Cook, chapter 01; Sklar, chapters 1-3; W.Benjamin. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 1938 in Braudy & Cohen

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

The past as a mirror with contemporary implications

The symbolism and representation of the West

SEPTEMBER 12: THE BIRTH OF NARRATIVE FILM AND THE SHAPING OF HISTORY

FILM: *THE BIRTH OF A NATION*, D. W. Griffith, 1915

READING: Cook, chapter 03; Sklar, chapter 4; Eisenstein, *Dickens, Griffith, and Film Today*, 1944, Gunning, *D.W. Griffith and the Origins of American Narrative Film*, 1991, Lang, *The Birth of a Nation*

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

The use and misuse of history and cultural hegemony and racial antagonism

Technical innovations

Lasting influence: The impact of *The Birth of a Nation*

SEPTEMBER 19: DOCUMENTARIES FACILITATE THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

FILM: R. Flaherty, *NANOOK OF THE NORTH*, 1922

READING: Cook, chapter 06; Sklar, part 2; E. Panofsky. *Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures*, 1934/47 in Braudy & Cohen

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

Visions of the 'Other'

Documentary evidence of the global village

Reality vs. Fiction

SEPTEMBER 26: VISIONS OF THE MODERN WORLD

Chaplin's “Little Tramp” as social commentary

FILM: *MODERN TIMES*, C. Chaplin, 1936

READING: Cook, chapter 07, Sklar, chapter 6, Sarris, *Notes on the Auteur Theory*, 1962;

Perez, *The Material Ghost*, 1998 in Braudy & Cohen

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

Introduction of sound (dialogue?)

Film as polemic

Humanism vs. technology

The “Little Tramp” as Everyman

OCTOBER 3: DEATH OF THE AMERICAN SOUL

FILM: *CITIZEN KANE*, O. Welles, 1941

READING: Cook, chapter 10, Sklar, part 3; Bazin, *What is Cinema?* 1950-5
in Braudy & Cohen, Naremore, *Orson Welles's Citizen Kane*.

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

Celebrity as metaphor and the political business of America

Film as biography – fact vs. fiction

The character of America

Exploration of media: New film techniques and the use of symbolism

OCTOBER 10: THE WEST AS METAPHOR

FILM: *HIGH NOON*, F. Zinneman , 1952

READING: Cook, chapter 12; Sklar, chapters 15-16, Frankel, *High Noon*.

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

The individual against the community

Community social obligations

Sexual roles and their implications

Contemporary political implications

OCTOBER 17: THE RISE OF YOUTH CULTURE

FILM: *EASY RIDER*, D. Hopper, 1969

READING: Cook, chapter 20; Sklar, chapters 17-19

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

Social alienation

The violence of modern life

The dark side of American culture

Rebellion as escape, the renegade as hero

OCTOBER 24: ANXIETY IN THE AGE OF AQUARIUS

FILM: *NASHVILLE*, R. Altman., 1975

READING: Cook, chapter 20; Sklar, chapter 20

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

Politics as entertainment

America as a land of gun culture

Changes in the sexual landscape

Contemporary implications

OCTOBER 31 CINEMA FOR A MULTICULTURAL AMERICA

THE EMERGENCE OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN CINEMA

FILM : *DO THE RIGHT THING* , S. Lee , 1989

READING: Cook, chapter 20; last chapter of Sklar, part 5

Diawara, *Black Spectatorship*, 1988 in Braudy & Cohen

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

Racial tension and conflict

Morality, ethics, and ambivalence

The nature of community and ethnic identity

NOVEMBER 7: ETHNICITY, CROSS CULTURALISM AND BREAKING THE CODE

FILM: *LONE STAR*, J. Sayles, 1996

READING: Cook, chapter 21

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

Place as character

Subversion of cultural stereotypes

The Ideal of American character

The West as metaphor

NOVEMBER 14: LIFE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

FILM: *LOST IN TRANSLATION*, S. Coppola, 2003

READING: Cook, chapter 21; Friedberg, *The End of Cinema*, 2000, in Braudy & Cohen

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

The feminine gaze

Cross cultural confusion and alienation

Making sense of dislocation

NOVEMBER 21: NO CLASS

ASSIGNMENT: Watch

WRITE AN EXTENDED BLOG ABOUT IT. Emphasize its current relevance.

NOVEMBER 28: CINEMA GOES RETROSPECTIVE

FILM: *HAIL CAESAR*, J. & E. Coen, 2016

READING: Cook, chapter 21; Allen, *The Impact of Digital Technologies*, 2002, in Braudy & Cohen

ISSUES TO ADDRESS:

For The love and meaning of Cinema-an overview of cinema genres

Historical precedents with current implications

Social anxiety

Religion as confession

DECEMBER 6: SUMMATION OF COURSE - DISCUSSION OF NEW DIRECTIONS

****PAPERS DUE****

Disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or arc@georgetown.edu.

Turnitin.com

Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers can be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity

During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university's Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the

university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online videoconferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Blackboard will not be changed due to campus closings.

The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

Georgetown Honor System

All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the honor code material located at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>, and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, What is Plagiarism, Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process. Papers in this course will all be submitted to turnitin.com for checking.

Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Plagiarism

In accord with university policy, all incidents of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail.

If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student may receive a grade of F for the course.

Policy Accommodating Students' Religious Observances

The following is university policy:

Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

Library Reserves: access through GU email. Click the link below!

Want to place an item on reserve? Physical or electronic? Book or streaming media? Check to see if Georgetown University Library owns the item(s) [here](#) . Secondly, complete the [appropriate reserve request form](#).

TURNITIN Directions for Profs

Georgetown has a full license to use [Turnitin.com](#) and other iParadigm products, such as Grademark, etc. Go to [www.turnitin.com](#) and click on the "Create Account" button at the top of the Turnitin homepage.

If you haven't already signed up, the information you will need is as follows: account code: **81031**; "join" password: **classreg2**. With that information you can establish your own profile, register your classes(s), and instruct students to submit their papers to Turnitin. Signing up is really very easy, and Turnitin has good "help" features, including a step-by-step tutorial about the process.

2 - Former users:

Many faculty used Turnitin regularly before there was a hiatus year due to budget constraints. Consequently, these former users may experience difficulty accessing their old accounts. Please reply to this email if this happens to you.

We'd like to provide the best help to you. If you would like the Honor Council to submit a paper for you, we can do that, and send the Originality Report back right away.

On using Turnitin, this page is very helpful. http://turnitin.com/en_us/support/help-center

Turnitin available via Blackboard:

There also is a [portal in Blackboard \(Bb\)](#) if you like to have your students submit papers to Turnitin via Bb. Although it is preferable to use Turnitin for all students in a class, it also is possible to do single submissions if you have cause to do so.

Even if you are an experienced student paper reader, here also are a few features the Honor Council has noticed in cases reported which may cause faculty to be uncertain about the authenticity of student work:

- a - the quality of a student's previous written work is just too inconsistent with the paper at issue
- b - the final paper submitted is very different from previous drafts
- c - the student uses references or sources not recommended or used in class
- d - the paper is off the topic assigned.

Please understand that no one of these observations is proof of any wrong-doing but have been cited by faculty as to why a paper required further analysis, and sometimes investigation and adjudication.

Title IX at Georgetown

<https://titleix.georgetown.edu/>

Sexual Misconduct

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational programs, which includes sexual harassment or any acts of sexual misconduct. Title IX requires the University, upon becoming aware of any incident of sexual harassment and misconduct to respond appropriately to protect and maintain the safety of the University community, including students, faculty, and staff.

Georgetown University prohibits sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, and stalking.

Discrimination based on sex, including sexual misconduct and discrimination based on pregnancy or parenting status, subverts the University's mission and threatens permanent damage to the educational experience, careers, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

Please know that as a faculty member I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence and sexual assault. However, University policy also requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University’s response to sexual misconduct.

Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:

Jen Schweer, MA, LPC

Associate Director of Health Education Services for Sexual
Assault Response and Prevention
(202) 687-0323
jls242@georgetown.edu

Erica Shirley

Trauma Specialist
Counseling and Psychiatric
Services (CAPS)
(202) 687-6985
els54@georgetown.edu

More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at:
<https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/get-help>.

Pregnancy Adjustments and Accommodations

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students. Students may request adjustments based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. Specific adjustments will be handled on a case by case basis and will depend on medical need and academic requirements. Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out at: <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/student-pregnancy>.

