FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

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http://filmstudies.yale.edu
M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Senior Lecturer Marc Lapadula

Lecturers Oksana Chefranova, Thomas Allen Harris, Brian Meacham, Camille Thomasson

FIELDS OF STUDY

Film and Media Studies is an interdisciplinary field drawing on the study of the history of art, national cultures and literatures, literary theory, philosophy, anthropology, feminist and queer studies, race and representation, and other areas. To study film and media at Yale, every doctoral student must be accepted into a combined program involving another discipline. Film and Media Studies offers a combined Ph.D. with African American Studies, American Studies, Comparative Literature, East Asian Languages and Literatures, English, French, German, History of Art, Italian, and Slavic Languages and Literatures. In addition to acquiring a firm grounding in the methods and core material of both film-media studies and another discipline, the candidate is advised to coordinate a plan of study involving comprehensive knowledge of one or more areas of specialization. Such areas include:

1. Historiography, including archival history, history of technology, silent film.
3. European film: British-Irish, French, German and Nordic, Italian, Slavic.
5. World film: global image exchange; cinema in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.
6. Documentary as an aesthetic, cultural, and ideological practice.
7. Cinema in its relations with other arts and other media.
8. Screen cultures, screened images, post-cinema, theory and history of media.

Through course work, examinations, and the dissertation, the candidate links a film and media specialty with material and methods coming from the participating discipline. Directors of graduate studies from both programs monitor the candidate's plans and progress.

In addition to the combined Ph.D. program, Film and Media Studies offers students in the Graduate School's other doctoral programs the chance to obtain a Graduate Certificate in Film and Media Studies. See Film and Media Studies, under Non-Degree Granting Programs, Councils, and Research Institutes, in this bulletin.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Combined-program applicants should familiarize themselves fully not only with the Film and Media Studies entrance requirements but with those of the other graduate program as well. Scores from the GRE General Test are required. Since combined-program applicants must be admitted both by Film and Media Studies and by the other department, candidates should make sure that the material they submit with the application clearly addresses the requirements and mission of both graduate programs.

The application for Film and Media Studies is administered by the Office of Graduate Admissions. All applications are to be completed online and can be accessed by visiting its website at http://gsas.yale.edu/admission-graduate-school. In the “Program of Study” section of the application, the applicant should choose Film and Media Studies as well as another department, since all students in the program must select a second program to combine with Film and Media Studies. All applications, including writing samples, are read by the admissions committees in both programs.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Every student selected for the combined program is subject to the supervision of the Film and Media Studies program and the relevant participating department. A written protocol between each department and Film and Media Studies outlines the requirements and schedule to be borne in mind as a plan of study is worked out in consultation with the director of graduate studies (DGS) of Film and
Media Studies and the DGS of the participating department. In all cases, students are required to take two core seminars in Film and Media Studies (FILM 601 and FILM 603) as well as at least four additional Film and Media Studies seminars. Course requirements vary for participating departments. By October 1 of the third year, all students must have fulfilled an assignment related to foundational texts and films. Later that year, students advance to candidacy by completing qualifying examinations and a dissertation prospectus.

1. Qualifying examinations follow the regulations of the participating department with at least one member of the Film and Media Studies Executive Committee participating.

2. The dissertation prospectus is presented to a faculty committee or the entire faculty of the participating department. The prospectus is also submitted to the prospectus committee of Film and Media Studies for approval.

3. A defense of method occurs when the dissertation is nearing completion, one or two terms before submission. The purpose of this defense is to provide guidance and feedback at a critical stage, in order to assist the dissertation's final form. At least three faculty readers meet with the student; the DGS of Film and Media Studies and the DGS of the participating department are also invited to participate. At least one examiner of the dissertation must be a member of the Film and Media Studies Executive Committee and one must be from the participating department.

The faculty in Film and Media Studies considers participation in the Teaching Fellows Program to be essential to the professional preparation of graduate students. Students normally teach in years three and four. Every student may expect to assist in two Film and Media Studies courses, one of which will very likely be Introduction to Film Studies (FILM 150) or Introduction to Media (FILM 160).

M.A. with a concentration in Public Humanities.

This workshop in audiovisual scholarship explores ways to present research through the moving image. Students work within a Public Humanities framework to make a documentary that draws on their disciplinary fields of study. Designed to fulfill requirements for the Graduate Certificate in Film and Media Studies. Prerequisite: FILM 601. ½ Course cr per term

FILM 651b / CPLT 929b, Adaptation and Representation in Film  Dudley Andrew
Cinematic adaptations of works from older arts, particularly literature. Adaptation as a sign of the modernity of cinema. Case studies of filmic transformations; the status of the arts in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This course demands additional reading and a lengthy term paper as well as a short written paper and an in-class presentation.

FILM 690a / CPLT 913a, Radical Cinemas of Latin America  Moira Fradinger
An introductory overview of Latin American cinema, with an emphasis on post-World War II films produced in Cuba, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. Examination of each film in its historical and aesthetic aspects, and in light of questions concerning national cinema and “third cinema.” Examples from both pre-1945 and contemporary films. Conducted in English; knowledge of Spanish and Portuguese helpful but not required.

FILM 705a, Film History and Theory of Animation  Aaron Gerow
A survey of the history and theory of animation. Examples from around the world, from various traditions, and from different periods.

FILM 735a and FILM 736b / AMST 832a and AMST 833b, Documentary Film Workshop  Charles Musser
This workshop in audiovisual scholarship explores ways to present research through the moving image. Students work within a Public Humanities framework to make a documentary that draws on their disciplinary fields of study. Designed to fulfill requirements for the M.A. with a concentration in Public Humanities.

FILM 751a / CPLT 933a / ENGL 928a, British Cinema  Katie Trumpener
Key films and topics in British cinema. Special attention to the provincial origins of British cinema; overlaps between filmic, literary, and visual modernism; attempts to build on the British literary and dramatic tradition; cinema's role in the war effort and in redefining national identity; postwar auteur and experimental filmmaking; “heritage” films and alternative approaches to tradition. Accompanying readings in British film theorists, film sociology (including Mass Observation), and cultural studies accounts of film spectatorship and memories. Films by Mitchell and Kenyon, Maurice Elvey, Anthony Asquith, Len Lye, John Grierson, Alfred Hitchcock, Alberto Cavalcanti, Humphrey Jennings, Michael Powell, Carol Reed, David Lean, Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson, Richard Lester, Peter Watkins, Stanley Kubrick, Laura Mulvey, Ken Loach, Mike Leigh, Terence Davies, Terry Gilliam, Peter Greenaway, Michael Winterbottom, Patrick Keiller, Steve McQueen.
FILM 755b / CPLT 935b / FREN 752b, French Cinema through the New Wave  Dudley Andrew
This seminar uses a sample of twenty films (with clips from many others) to survey four decades of the tradition of French cinema crowned by the privileged moment of the New Wave. Graduate students are asked to challenge the idea of “national cinema” by reporting on some non-canonical or marginal film before midterm. Keeping the culture industry in view, we question the extent to which such a consistently robust cinema has been bound to—or remained partly independent of—a nation that from 1930 to 1970 underwent a depression, a socialist experiment, an occupation, a liberation, and the humiliations of decolonization abroad and social unrest (May ’68) at home. In addition to the midterm contribution, graduate students write a substantial term paper.

FILM 770a / CPLT 614a, East German Literature and Film  Katie Trumpener
The German Democratic Republic (1949–89) was a political and aesthetic experiment that failed, buffeted by external pressures and eroded by internal contradictions. For forty years, in fact, its most ambitious literary texts and films (some suppressed, others widely popular) explored such contradictions, often in a vigilant, Brechtian spirit of irony and dialectics. This course examines key texts both as aesthetic experiments and as critiques of the country’s emerging cultural institutions and state censorship, recurrent political debates, and pressing social issues. Texts by Brecht, Uwe Johnson, Heiner Müller, Christa Wolf, Johannes Bobrowski, Franz Fühmann, Wolf Biermann, Thomas Brasch, Christoph Hein; films by Slatan Dudow, Kurt Maetzig, Konrad Wolf, Heiner Carow, Frank Beyer, Jürgen Böttcher, Volker Koepp. Knowledge of German desirable but not crucial; all texts available in English.

FILM 778b / RUSS 695b, Russian Literature and Film in the 1920s and 1930s  Katerina Clark
This course presents a historical overview, incorporating some of the main landmarks of the 1920s and 1930s including works by Pilnyak, Bakhtin, the Formalists, Platonov, Mayakovsky, Bulgakov, Zoshchenko, Eisenstein, Protazanov, Pudovkin, the Vasilyev “brothers,” and G. Aleksandrov.

FILM 833b, Semiotics  Francesco Casetti
The seminar discusses the most relevant concepts and categories elaborated by semiotics in order to provide analytical tools for “close readings” of verbal or visual texts, narrative forms, cultural objects, artifacts, and social situations. Semiotics’s foundational goal consisted in reetracing how meaning emerges and circulates in connection with a variety of objects, from literary works to social rituals, from natural phenomena to artificial languages. In an attempt to revamp semiotics’s main task, we begin from the opposed conceptualization of “sign” in the Saussurean and Peircean traditions and from the opposed ideas of “semiosis” that they suggest. Then, moving from “sign” to “text,” we analyze the structures and the dynamics of discourses—whether verbal, visual, musical, etc. A particular stress is put on the semantic and syntactic structures of narrative texts in an attempt to draw from them a model of human and nonhuman action. The third section retraces the way enunciation produces subjectivity and deixis, in order to gain a better understanding of the context-bound nature of discourses and some tools for the analysis of context itself as a semiotic entity. We end by discussing the complex strategies that allow a discourse to tackle “reality” and “truth”—in the hope of dismantling the current use of naïve epistemologies. Analytical tools are tested in class through close readings of a great variety of texts and situations, from Melania Trump’s depictions to Genesis, from short novels to social encounters.

FILM 873a / EALL 581a, Japanese Cinema and Its Others  Aaron Gerow
A critical inquiry into the myth of a homogeneous Japan through analyzing how Japanese film and media historically represent “others” of different races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, and sexualities, including blacks, ethnic Koreans, Okinawans, Ainu, undocumented immigrants, LGBT minorities, the disabled, youth, and “monstrous” others like ghosts.

FILM 885b, Global Film and Media Concepts  John MacKay
This workshop course explores how film and media concepts move across time, through space, and among languages, and are transformed in the process. Sharing our linguistic, historical, and theoretical knowledge, we try to understand how linguistic difference and historical setting affect film and media concepts and the uses to which they are put. Our objects of investigation are terms such as spectator, image, information, and projection.

FILM 921b / EALL 806b / EAST 806b, Research in Japanese Film History  Aaron Gerow
This seminar covers the methods and problems of researching and writing Japanese film history. We review the theoretical issues involved in historiography in general and film historiography in particular, and then consider how these are pertinent to the study of Japanese cinema history. Our approach is critical, as we examine several recent examples of Japanese film historiography, as well as practical, as we explore various methods and strategies for researching Japanese film history. We particularly focus on the Japanese cinema’s historical relation to the nation, especially in terms of how cinema may help us historicize the nation, and vice versa. Students develop their own research project using the unique collections at Yale. Knowledge of Japanese is helpful but not essential.

FILM 973b / ENGL 973b, Modernity and the Time of Literature  Robert Williams
This course examines transformations in temporality that occurred in the sciences and arts during the twentieth century. From the arrival of Einsteinian relativity to more contemporary proofs on quantum nonlocality, the question of time in the twentieth century threatened to overturn some of our oldest assumptions about cause and effect, duration, history, presentness, and futurity. These new temporalities were as scientifically and philosophically vexing as they were rife with spiritual and aesthetic possibility—a dynamic reflected in the literary and artistic forms that were central to these transformations. Our reading reflects this deeply cross-cultural and interdisciplinary trajectory, including histories of science and technology (Peter Galison, N. Katherine Hayles, David Kaiser), philosophies of time (Heidegger, Bruno Latour, Bernard Stiegler, McLuhan, Luhmann), critical theories of temporal form (Derrida, Adorno, Jameson, Pamela Lee, Kojin Karatani), a wide array of literary texts (William Burroughs, Thomas Pynchon, Ursula K. Le Guin, Tom McCarthy, and others), as well as important cinematic innovations (Jodorowsky, Godard, Kubrick). What is the “time” of literature? of film? How does
art transform or reinforce theories of temporal flow? How do new technologies of composition and circulation alter the temporal effects of a given work? What was the “End of History”? 