FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

Humanities Quadrangle, 1st floor, 203.436.4668
http://filmstudies.yale.edu
M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Associate Professors Marta Figlerowicz, R. John Williams

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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. Students have the option to apply for admission to one of two tracks within the program: either solely to the Ph.D. in Film and Media Studies or to a combined program track involving one of the following disciplines: African American Studies, American Studies, Comparative Literature, East Asian Languages and Literatures, English, French, German, History of Art, Italian Studies, and Slavic Languages and Literatures. In addition to acquiring a firm grounding in the methods and core material of film and media studies (and, for the combined degree track students, another discipline), all students are expected to coordinate a plan of study involving comprehensive knowledge of one or more areas of specialization.

Through course work, examinations, and the dissertation, candidates in a combined degree program link a film and media specialty with the participating discipline. Directors of graduate studies from both programs monitor the candidate's plans and progress.

To be considered for admission to the combined degree track, applicants must indicate both Film and Media Studies and one of the participating departments/programs listed above. Students seeking admission to Film and Media Studies alone should indicate only Film and Media Studies on their application.

In addition to the 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 REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Every student selected for the combined program track 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 FILM 601 as well as at least five additional Film and Media Studies seminars, one of which should be FILM 603. With the permission of the DGS, another Film and Media Studies course may be substituted for FILM 603. Course requirements vary for participating departments. By the third year, students advance to candidacy by completing qualifying examinations and a dissertation prospectus.

Students in the stand-alone Film and Media Studies track are held to the same Department of Film and Media Studies requirements and deadlines as students in the combined degree track: 12 graduate-level courses, including the required courses listed above and four additional Film and Media Studies seminars.

In addition, students in both tracks are expected to complete the following requirements:

1. **Qualifying examinations.** Qualifying examinations follow the regulations of the participating department with at least one member of the Film and Media Studies Executive Committee participating. Students pursuing the stand-alone Ph.D. in Film and Media Studies should consult the DGS for details about the format of the examinations and formation of the examining committee.

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

3. **Defense of Method.** 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 is (and, for students in the combined degree program, the DGS of the participating department is also) invited to participate. For combined degree students, 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; for students in the stand-alone track, two-thirds of the dissertation committee members should be a member of the Film and Media Studies Executive Committee.

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). Students in the stand-alone track are expected to teach in the two courses above as well as two other courses in either Film and Media Studies or an allied program, with the permission of the DGS.
MASTER’S DEGREE
M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

COURSES

The required core seminars, FILM 601 and FILM 603, are offered in alternating years.

FILM 605a, Film and Media Studies Certificate Workshop  Francesco Casetti
The workshop is built on students’ needs and orientations. It is aimed at helping the individual trajectories of students and at deepening the topics they have met while attending seminars, conferences, and lectures. Students are required to present a final qualifying paper demonstrating their capacity to do interdisciplinary work. The workshop covers two terms and counts as one regular course credit. Open only to students pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Film and Media Studies. Prerequisite: FILM 601. ½ Course cr

FILM 617a / CPLT 904a / FREN 875a / GMAN 617a / SPAN 901a, Psychoanalysis: Key Conceptual Differences between Freud and Lacan  Moira Fradinger
Working with primary sources mainly from the Freudian and Lacanian corpuses, this seminar is an introduction to key concepts of continental psychoanalytic theory. Students gain proficiency in what has been called “the language of psychoanalysis,” as well as tools for their critical practice in humanities disciplines such as literary criticism, political theory, film studies, gender studies, theory of ideology, sociology, etc. Concepts studied include the unconscious, identification, the drive, repetition, the imaginary, the symbolic, the real, and jouissance. A central goal of the seminar is to disambiguate Freud’s corpus from Lacan’s return to it. We pay special attention to Freud’s "three" (the ego, superego, and id) in comparison to Lacan’s "three" (the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real). Depending on the interests of the group, a special unit can be added (choosing from topics such as sexuality, perversion, fetishism, psychosis, anti-psychiatry, etc.). Commentators and critics of Freud and Lacan are also consulted (Michel Arrivé, Guy Le Gaufey, Jean Laplanche, André Green, Markos Zafiropoulos, and others). Taught in English. Materials can be provided to cover the linguistic range of the group.

FILM 629a / RUSS 715a, Documentary, Fiction, Docufiction  John MacKay
A seminar on the relationship between nonfictional and fictional media practice, with a particular focus on the “docufiction” form. Topics to be discussed include debates over the coherence of the notion of “documentary”; the epistemological and political claims of fiction and documentary; and the relationship of documentary and fictional practice to questions of nationhood, ethnicity, and gender. Films by directors such as Vertov, Eisenstein, Shub, Flaherty, Ivens, Visconti, Varda, Makavejev, Trinh Minh-ha, Costa, and Kiarostami.

FILM 653a / AMST 653a, Studies in Documentary Film  Charles Musser
This course examines key works, crucial texts, and fundamental concepts in the critical study of nonfiction cinema, exploring the participant-observer dialectic, the performative, and changing ideas of truth in documentary forms.

FILM 735a / AMST 832a, 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 775a / RUSS 696a, Post-Stalin Literature and Film**  Katerina Clark
The main developments in Russian and Soviet literature and film from Stalin’s death in 1953 to the present.

**FILM 779a / ITAL 783a, Italian Film Ecologies: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow**  Millicent Marcus
Landscape and the natural environment have never occupied “background” status in Italian film. Given the spectacular visual presence of its terrain — thanks to the relative proximity of mountain chains and the long seacoast — and given the pivotal importance of farming and pasturage in this traditionally agrarian economy, the synergy between the human and natural worlds has played a prominent role in Italian filmmaking since the very inception of the industry. Most recently, two developments have pushed this issue to the forefront of scholarly attention: the advent of ecocriticism, which found one of its earliest and most influential champions in Serenella Iovino, and the establishment of regional film commissions, grassroots production centers that sponsored cinematic works attuned to the specificity of “the local.” The course includes study of films that predate our current environmental consciousness, as well as recent films that foreground it in narrative terms. In the case of the older films, which have already attracted a great deal of critical commentary over time, we work to shift our interpretive frame in an “eco-friendly” direction (even when the films’ characters are hardly friends of the environment). Among the films considered are  
*Le quattro volte*, *Il vento fa il suo giro*, *L'uomo che verrà*, *Gomorra*, *L'albero degli zoccoli*, *Riso amaro*, *Red Desert*, *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, and *Il ladro di bambini*. We screen one film a week and devote our seminars to close analysis of the works in question.

**FILM 799a / MUSI 938a, Sound Studies**  Brian Kane
Sound studies is an interdisciplinary field, situated at the intersection of science and technology studies, film, music, media, anthropology, and cultural studies. Scholars in sound studies analyze both the technologies and cultural techniques involved in the production, reception, and meaning of sound and listening. This seminar is intended as a broad introduction to sound studies. We read major texts and theorists in the field and investigate some of the central topics of concern, such as soundscape (contemporary and historical), acoustic ecology, listening (from philosophical, sociological, and cultural perspectives), electronic music and noise, sound art, histories of audio technologies, and cultural techniques of sound production and reception. Substantial weekly readings and a final research project are required.

**FILM 833a, Semiotics**  Francesco Casetti
Digging into semiotics tradition, the seminar provides analytical tools for “close readings” of a vast array of objects and operations, from verbal texts to all sorts of images, from cultural practices to all sorts of manipulation. Semiotics’ foundational goal consisted in retracing how meaning emerges in these objects and operations, how it circulates within and between different cultural environments, and how it affects and is affected by the cultural contexts in which these objects and operations are embedded. To revamp semiotics’ main tasks, after an introduction about the idea of “making meaning,” the seminar engages students in a weekly discussion about situations, procedures, objects, and attributes that are “meaningful,” in the double sense that they have meaning and they arrange reality in a meaningful way. Objects of analysis are
intentionally disparate; the constant application of a set of analytical tools provides
the coherence of the seminar. Students are expected to regularly attend the seminar,
actively participate in discussions, propose new objects of analysis, present a case study
(fifteen–twenty minutes), and write a final paper (max. 5,000 words). Enrollment
limited to fifteen. Students from Film and Media Studies and the School of Architecture
have priority: they are asked to express their choice by August 25. Students from other
departments are asked to send the instructor up to ten lines with the reasons why they
want to attend the seminar by August 26. The seminar is aimed at bolstering a dialogue
that crosses cultures and disciplines.

**FILM 834a, What is a Dispositif, Today?** Francesco Casetti
The seminar explores the concept of dispositif, with the help of scholars like Deleuze,
Agamben, Simondon, Latour, Flusser, Siegert, and Stigler. While adopting some of
the features of a directed reading group, the seminar alternates collective discussions
in the classroom and more personal works developed by single students under the
direction of the instructor. The seminar hosts scholars of different fields who discuss
their own approach to the concept of dispositif with the students. The seminar is aimed
at bolstering a dialogue that crosses cultures and disciplines. Seminar enrollment is
limited to 6 students. Students are expected to regularly attend the collective meetings,
to meet the instructor individually, and to write a short, 5-page paper with the project
for future research.

**FILM 881b / EALL 581b, Japanese Cinema before 1960** Aaron Gerow
The history of Japanese cinema to 1960, including the social, cultural, and industrial
backgrounds to its development. Periods covered include the silent era, the coming of
sound and the wartime period, the occupation era, the golden age of the 1950s, and the
new modernism of the late 1950s.

**FILM 893a / EALL 893, Japanese Comedy** Aaron Gerow
Survey of the history of Japanese comedy, focusing on humor in Japanese performance,
literature, cinema, television, and other media, and analyzing its socio-cultural and
ideological implications over time. The seminar will concentrate on the Meiji period on,
though it will cover some of the history before that. Knowledge of Japanese is required.

**FILM 900a or b, Directed Reading** Staff

**FILM 901a or b, Individual Research** Staff

**FILM 919b / ENGL 919b, Elemental Media** John Peters
This interdisciplinary seminar explores not only how media represent the environment
but also how they sometimes constitute it. The readings and discussions range widely
across theoretical approaches, historical periods, natural environments, and literary
and artistic genres. The ultimate question is what kinds of intellectual resources and
academic traditions we can mobilize in the name of a habitable planet. This class offers
some orientation to media theory generally but more specifically to elemental media
theory (also known, without significant difference, as eco-media or environmental
media). The dispersive force of eclectic examples will be countered by a conceptual and
narrative warp and weft.

**FILM 995b, Directed Reading** Staff