FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

Humanities Quadrangle, 1st floor, 203-436-4668
http://filmstudies.yale.edu
M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Director of Graduate Studies
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Professors Francisco Casetti, Katerina Clark, Aaron Gerow, Brian Kane, John MacKay, Millicent Marcus, Charles Musser, Fatima Naqvi, John Durham Peters, Katie Trumpener, Jing Tsu, Laura Wexler

Associate Professors Marta Figlerowicz, R. John Williams

Assistant Professor Marijeta Bozovic

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 Studies, 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.

This is a combined degree program. To be considered for admission to this program, applicants must indicate both Film and Media Studies and one of the participating departments/programs listed above.

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 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).

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 601b / CPLT 917b / ENGL 920b, Foundations of Film and Media
Dudley Andrew and John Peters

The course sets in place some undergirding for students who want to anchor their film interest to the professional discourse of this field. A coordinated set of topics in film theory is interrupted first by the often discordant voice of history and second by the obtuseness of the films examined each week. Films themselves take the lead in our discussions.

FILM 605a and FILM 606b, 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 per term

FILM 609a / 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 693b / AFAM 724b / AMST 732b / HSAR 759b / WGSS 693b, Imaging War, Imagining Peace: Memory, Justice, and Repair
Laura Wexler

This course explores the ways in which both war and peace have been imagined and represented, and how those visual practices might be unlearned and reimagined. What do images and imaginings of war and peace leave out of view, and how can we bring both underlying social vulnerability and extant networks of protest and resistance into greater visibility? How might we avoid automatized reiterations of well-worn locations and scenarios of violence, for example in constructions of “the enemy,” and develop new approaches to the nationalist, racialized, and gendered stakes of conflict? What alternative acts of intervention, witnessing, and reparation might we create so as to see emergencies more freshly—at a time of conflict, as well as in anticipation and in retrospect? Can the visual archives of violence be reframed and recirculated to shape more firmly the potential of justice, cohabitation, and peace? How can visualizations of antiwar movements and peace actions be mobilized more effectively? This team-taught course is inspired by the documentary work of Susan Meiselas. Her distinctive photographic practice with communities in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile, Kurdistan, and elsewhere, her repeated return to sites of conflict over time, and her collaboration with the subjects of her images, as well as her extensive and innovative archival work, serve as one model for the kinds of approaches we want to explore and foster. In addition, our work is guided by close study of authors such as Leni Riefenstahl, Virginia Woolf, Alain Resnais, Susan Sontag, Sigmund Freud, Errol Morris, Judith Butler, Ariella Azoulay, Diana Taylor, Thy Phu, David Shneer, Amitav Ghosh, Anne McClintock, Grace Paley, Maaza Mengiste, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Karla Cornejo Villavicencio, Jenny Holzer, Walid Raad, Harun Farocki, Sam Durant, Sim Chi Yin, and more.

FILM 729a / CPLT 716a / GMAN 730a, German New Waves in Cold War Europe
Katie Trumpener

Before 1961, Berlin was the best place in Europe to follow both Eastern and Western Europe’s emerging cinematic New Waves. And first in East, then in West Germany, young filmmakers developed distinctive approaches to political and documentary filmmaking, to the Nazi past and the Cold War, to class, gender, and social transformation. This course juxtaposes the two German New Waves, focusing on aesthetic ferment, institutional barriers, and transformation. Features, documentaries, and experimental films by Gerhard Klein, Konrad Wolf, Alexander Kluge, Herbert Vesely, Edgar Reitz, Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, Jürgen Böttcher, Heiner Carow, Frank Beyer, Wim Wenders, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Helke Sander, Helke Misselwitz, read against other Eastern and Western New Wave films (i.e., by Lindsay Anderson, Karel Reisz, Andrzej Munk, Alain Resnais, Mikhail Kalatozov, Milos Forman).

FILM 735a / AMST 822a, 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 778a / RUSS 695a, 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 810a / AMST 729a / WGSS 746a, Visual Kinship: Families and Photographs  Laura Wexler
Exploration of the history and practice of family photography from an interdisciplinary perspective. Study of family photographs from the analog to the digital era, from snapshots to portraits, and from instrumental images to art exhibitions. Particular attention to the ways in which family photographs have helped establish gendered and racial hierarchies and examination of recent ways of reconceiving these images.

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 873a / EALL 581a, Japanese Cinema and Its Others  Aaron Gerow
Critical inquiry into the myth of a homogeneous Japan through analysis of how Japanese film and media historically represent “others” of different races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, and sexualities, including women, black residents, ethnic Koreans, Okinawans, Ainu, undocumented immigrants, LGBTQ minorities, the disabled, youth, and monstrous others such as ghosts.

FILM 900a, Directed Reading  Staff

FILM 901a, Individual Research  Staff

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.