

POST-CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD CINEMA (1960-present)

Film 3342G

Western University

Film Studies Winter 2022

Screenings: Asynchronous weekly screenings—links posted on OWL

Lecture/Discussion: Wednesdays 12:30-2:30 pm*

(*synchronous discussion via zoom from 1:15pm-2:30pm)

Dr. Joseph Wlodarz
Email: jwldarz@uwo.ca

TA: Panteleimon Tsiokos
Email: ptsiokos@uwo.ca

Online Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:30-3:30 pm; Thursdays 12:00-1:00 pm and by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the central industrial, technological, aesthetic, and ideological developments in the history of post-classical Hollywood cinema (roughly 1960-present) as well as the parallel growth of American independent cinema. We will explore the economic, aesthetic, and ideological transformations in American film from the social upheavals of the '60s and '70s to the contemporary era of conglomeration, globalization, and digital media. Key topics will include: the politics of genre revision; the shifting parameters of the “New Hollywood”; the fall of the Production Code and the representation of sex and violence; independent cinemas and social identity; the emergence of the international blockbuster; and crises of security in post-9/11 cinema.

Course Objectives: This course operates as an American film history course, but it also investigates the methods and ideological issues of film historical research more broadly. In addition, the course explores how film aesthetics and theory may be understood in the context of American film history.

Learning Outcomes: In addition to enhancing your formal analysis and critical thinking skills through class discussion and research papers, you will acquire the basic tools necessary to conduct informed film historical research, particularly of American film history, which can then be applied to the study of other cinemas.

COURSE TEXTS

Required:

1. Williams, Linda Ruth & Michael Hammond, eds. *Contemporary American Cinema* (London: McGraw Hill, 2006) [CAC]—print OR E-book at Western Bookstore
2. Additional readings from E-Journals available on OWL [OWL]

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING GUIDELINES

- Class Participation (synchronous online and/or online forums) [10%]
- Discussion Leading (Questions and Clip Analysis) [10%]
- Take-Home Midterm [15%]
- Film Analysis (1500 words) [20%]
- Final Research Paper (2500 words) [25%]
- Take-Home Final Exam [20%]

Class Participation: Students are highly encouraged to attend and to participate in the weekly zoom-based class discussions at 1:15 pm on Wednesdays. If you cannot attend one or more of these discussion sessions, however, you may also participate asynchronously by responding to questions/clips that will be posted in the Forum section of OWL. Your final Class Participation grade will be based on the quantity *and* quality of your participation in these discussion sessions and forums.

Discussion Leading: Working with 3-4 of your fellow classmates, you will lead discussion at least once during the term on the weekly screenings and readings. I will provide a list of guidelines and tips, but each discussion leader will be responsible for presenting a specific question about the film and/or the course readings as well as engaging your fellow students in a discussion about that element. You will need to coordinate with your group members to prepare and organize the discussion questions/material, and in most cases I will assess the group as a whole based on the overall quality of the discussion leading. Discussions will take place via zoom.

Exams: There will be one 90-minute take-home midterm (Feb. 11) and a 3-hour take-home final exam for the course. The midterm and final exams will be posted to OWL at least 24 hours before the submission deadline in order to allow for any potential technological or accommodation-based issues that may arise. The midterm and final exams will include clip analysis, paragraph responses, and/or essay questions.

Paper Assignments: During the term, you will focus your two writing assignments on *one* film made in the United States that is listed on the assignment sheet. The list includes films that will *not* be screened in class but that are relevant to the overall course material. The films will be drawn from the period of 1960-2010. You are encouraged to meet with me about these assignments at any point, especially when expanding on the first paper to write the final research essay. The two paper assignments are:

1. **Film Analysis (1500 words) [15%]**
Due to OWL on Friday Feb. 18
2. **Final Research Paper (2000 words) [25%]**
Due to OWL on Wednesday April 6

*****While daily late penalties apply (see below), papers that are over ONE week late—without any approved accommodation—will automatically receive a zero.***

Late Work: Course papers must be turned in complete and on time. Late papers will be penalized 5% points per day late (including weekends), except in the case of *properly documented* medical emergencies or illnesses (see below).

Note on Lectures: Weekly lectures will be recorded in advance and posted on OWL by Tuesday afternoon/early evening. You will then have the option of viewing the lecture before Wednesday's class OR during the first 45 minutes of our scheduled Wednesday class (12:30-1:15pm). Zoom-based discussions will begin promptly at 1:15pm each Wednesday, and I will inform you in advance if the weekly lecture happens to run longer than 45 minutes.

Note on Screenings: You are required to view weekly screenings before each Wednesday lecture/discussion. All weekly film screenings will be available via streaming sources. Links to the weekly screenings can be found in the Resources tab on OWL, and they will be posted by Monday afternoon. *There will also be screening introductions and guiding questions posted each week in the OWL Forum section.*

I encourage you to view the films on as large a screen as possible so that you can pay close attention to the visual style and formal construction of the films. Most screening links will also have optional subtitles/closed captions that you will be able to turn on (or off). Finally, you may also make an appointment to view any of the course films in the Film Study Center [UC-1126] by contacting the Film Library Assistant, Rachel Gunn (rgunn4@uwo.ca) (Phone: x85730).

Office Hours: I will be available to answer questions, clarify concepts/assignments, and assist you with your coursework during my weekly, virtual office hours (posted above). If you have an occasional conflict, feel free to email me and we can set up an alternative time to meet. I will also be available via email M-F from 9-5 and will do my best to respond to your email within two days. **Please note, however, that I may not respond to questions about the course that can be answered by simply reviewing the course syllabus.*

COURSE SCHEDULE

Section I: POSTCLASSICAL and "NEW HOLLYWOOD" CINEMAS

Week 1—January 10-12—Slashing Hollywood's Conventions

Screening: *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960, 109 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 3-10; 41-58; 93-95
& [OWL]: Williams, "Discipline and Fun: *Psycho* and Postmodern Cinema"

Week 2—Jan. 17-19—Underground Cinema & Urban Crisis

Screening: *Scorpio Rising* (Kenneth Anger, 1963, 28 min.)
& *Midnight Cowboy* (John Schlesinger, 1969, 113 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 12-37; 62-71
& [OWL]: Tinkcom, excerpt from *Working Like a Homosexual*
& [OWL]: Simon, “One Big Lousy X”

Section II: GENRE REVISION and the HOLLYWOOD RENAISSANCE

Week 3—Jan. 24-26—Reframing Film Noir

Screening: *Chinatown* (Roman Polanski, 1974, 131 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 90-107; 117-162
& [OWL]: Naremore, excerpt from *More Than Night*

Week 4—Jan. 31-Feb. 2— Reimagining the Hollywood Musical

Screening: *Nashville* (Robert Altman, 1975, 159 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 169-182
& [OWL]: Hoberman, “*Nashville* contra *Jaws*”
& [OWL]: Kael: “Coming: *Nashville*”

Week 5—Feb. 7-9—The Horror of War: Vietnam

Screening: *Apocalypse Now* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1979, 150 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 280-88
& [OWL]: Nguyen, excerpt from *Nothing Ever Dies*
& [OWL]: Beck, “The Sound of Storytelling”

****Take-Home Midterm Due to OWL by 5pm on Friday Feb. 11****

Section III: FEMINISM and NEW HOLLYWOOD CINEMA

Week 6—Feb. 14-16—Women and Working-Class Heroism

Screening: *Norma Rae* (Martin Ritt, 1979, 110 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 299-313
& [OWL]: Nystrom, excerpt from *Hard Hats, Rednecks, and Macho Men*
& [OWL]: Giroux, “*Norma Rae*: Character, Culture and Class”

****Film Analysis Essay Due to OWL by 5pm on Friday Feb. 18****

Week 7—Feb. 21-23—Reading Week—No Classes

Week 8—Feb. 28-March 2—Cold Warriors in the Reagan Era

Screening: *Aliens* (James Cameron, 1986, 137 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 223-246; 410-427
& [OWL]: Tasker, excerpts from *Spectacular Bodies*

Section IV: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT CINEMA

Week 9—March 7-9—Race, Resistance, and Revolution

Screening: *Born in Flames* (Lizzie Borden, 1983, 90 min.)
& *Illusions* (Julie Dash, 1982, 34 min.)
& *Tongues Untied* (Marlon Riggs, 1989, 55 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 247-264
& [OWL]: hooks, “The Oppositional Gaze”
& [OWL]: Brown, “A World on Fire”

Week 10—March 14-16— New Queer Cinema

Screening: *Paris is Burning* (Jennie Livingston, 1991, 71 min.)
& *The Living End* (Gregg Araki, 1992, 86 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 325-332; 379-407
& [OWL]: Pearl, “AIDS and New Queer Cinema”
& [OWL]: Contreras, “New Queer Cinema: Spectacle, Race, Utopia”

Section V: ENTERTAINMENT and DYSTOPIA: Millennial Hollywood

Week 11—March 21-23—Screening the War on Terror

Screening: *In the Valley of Elah* (Paul Haggis, 2007, 121 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 429-439
& [OWL]: Westwell, excerpts from *Parallel Lines*

Week 12—March 28-30—Pixar, Disney, and the Digital Era

Screening: *WALL-E* (Andrew Stanton, 2008, 98 min.)

Reading: [CAC]: Pgs. 265-277; 334-377
& [OWL]: Sobchack, “Animation and Automation”

Week 13—April 4-6—No Future?: America after the Crash

Screening: *The Florida Project* (Sean Baker, 2017, 111 min.)

Reading: [OWL]: Porton, “Life on the Margins”
& [OWL]: Pimpare, excerpts from *Ghettos, Tramps, and Welfare Queens*

****Final Research Essay Due to OWL by 12:30 pm on Wednesday April 6****

*****FINAL EXAM: SEE SCHEDULE for DATE and TIME*****

POLICIES and REGULATIONS

This instructor respects and upholds University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the physically disabled, visually and/or hearing impaired student; plagiarism; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to the attention of the instructor. For Film Studies regulations governing Term Work, Exams, Faculty Office Hours, Academic Relief (appeals, petitions, complaints), and other matters, please consult “Information for Students” on our website at www.uwo.ca/film

Prerequisites: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student’s final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as

source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Mental Health: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

Complaints: If students have a complaint concerning a course in which they are enrolled, they must first discuss the matter with the instructor of the course. If students are still not satisfied, they should then take the complaint to the English Department chair. These regulations are in place because a failure to follow these procedures creates the potential for injustices of various kinds affecting either the instructor or the students themselves, or both parties. Concerns should not be allowed to fester but should be raised with the instructor in a timely manner, so that they can be addressed in time to make a difference to the course.

Recordings: All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals under special circumstances. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

****NOTE: Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.***

Statement on Online Etiquette

Some components of this course will involve online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- please “arrive” to class on time

- please use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- to minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- [suggested for classes larger than 30 students] In order to give us optimum bandwidth and web quality, please turn off your video camera for the entire class unless you are invited to speak
- [suggested for cases where video is used] please be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor's request if the internet connection becomes unstable
- unless invited by your instructor, do **not** share your screen in the meeting

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- if you wish to speak, use the “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question
- remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking
- self-identify when speaking.
- remember to mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise)

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment. “Flaming” is never appropriate.
- Be professional and scholarly in all online postings. Cite the ideas of others appropriately.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

GRADING CRITERIA

A+ (90-100):

Argument: Clear development of a specific, challenging and original thesis. The writer has taken significant risks successfully; in the resulting piece, distinctive ideas and content have discovered their necessary distinctive form. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.

Presentation, structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors.

Research/scholarship: Evidence of effective, extensive and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

A (80 to 89):

Argument: The writer has taken risks and most of them succeed. Clear development of a specific and challenging thesis, with proper paragraphs. Detailed reference to appropriate texts, with evidence of individual response. Ability not only to expound subject but to see it around—subtleties and ambiguities, qualifications and concessions, relations to other subjects, etc.

Presentation, structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. Almost no typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with full range of sentence types (compound, complex, and compound-complex), with full range of punctuation (including semicolons, colons, dashes, parentheses). Graceful style, neither pompous nor breezy, and few errors.

Research/scholarship: Evidence of effective and independent research, with proper documentation of sources. Quotations used appropriately and purposively.

B (70 to 79):

Argument: Clear development of a specific thesis, with proper paragraphs. Adequately detailed reference to texts. Ability to expound reasonably sophisticated ideas with clarity.

Presentation/structure: Quotations well integrated into text. Proper paragraphs. A few typographical errors.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, with reasonable range of sentence types and full range of punctuation. Style not too wordy, with errors relatively few and minor.

Research Scholarship: Evidence of adequate research, with proper documentation of sources.

C (60 to 69):

Argument: Reasonably clear development of a thesis, with proper paragraphs. Basic ability to expound ideas, whose development might be rather thin. Effort to support points with references to the text. Tendency to replace analysis with descriptive retelling of plot.

Presentation/structure: Presentation showing lapses in tidiness and/or proofreading. Poor use of paragraphs.

Language Skills: Sentence structure correct, but perhaps overly simple, with tendency to avoid punctuation besides period and comma. Errors relatively few, but occasionally serious, with evident misunderstanding of some point of elementary grammar (comma splices, fragments, semicolon errors, subject-verb disagreements, poorly integrated quotations)

Research/Scholarship: reasonable effort at documentation, but rather thin.

D (50 to 59):

Argument: Difficulty with paragraphing or consecutive thought. Ideas inchoate but clouded by weak expression. Overgeneralization with inadequate support, or examples that run to lengthy paraphrase, with little or no analysis.

Presentation/Structure: Very poor to non-existent use of paragraphs. Inadequate and inaccurate documentation. Multiple typographical errors.

Language Skills: Errors of grammar or diction frequent enough to interfere with understanding.

Research/Scholarship: Little serious effort to research the topic.

F (49 and below):

Argument: Ideas too simple for level of course. Argument completely incoherent. Erroneous content showing little or no understanding of subject.

Presentation/Structure: Very sloppy proof-reading. Documentation virtually non-existent.

Language Skills: writing frequently ungrammatical.

Research/Scholarship: Non-existent. Content largely “borrowed” from sources with no individual distillation, but no apparent attempt to deceive. Failure to follow the course assignment and guidelines.

0 (Report to Department)

Plagiarism with intent to deceive.