

Cinema and Violence 331E. 01 Spring 2006 T R 11:40AM-01:05PM FA209
Irmak Ertuna ertuna1@binghamton.edu LT 1507(W 2-4 or by appointment)

Textbooks:

Braudy, Film Theory and Criticism
Kracauer, Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality
Mayne, Cinema and Spectatorship

Films:

Bergman, Persona (1966)
Fassbinder, Ali: Fear Eats the Soul (1974)
Gilliam, Brazil (1985)
Haneke, Funny Games (1997)
Hitchcock, Rope (1948)
Lynch, Blue Velvet (1986)
And clips from A Clockwork Orange, Seventh Seal, Vertigo, Birds, Love is Colder than Death if time permits.

Description:

The main theme of the course is the spectator's relationship to the violence on screen. Using film theory, studies of spectatorship, psychoanalysis and social theory, we will try to gain a critical approach to the classical narrative (as could be named Kiss Kiss Bang Bang a la Pauline Kael). What are our expectations as spectators when we are watching a film? Why do we enjoy violence? And in fact why are you taking this course entitled "cinema and violence." By watching the above-listed films some of which are undeniably art films, we will be looking at critical ways of screening violence and hence question the ways we have been conditioned by the "society of spectacle."

Grading:

Papers: Three papers (min. 3 double-spaced pages) on three popular films that you have watched on your own. In these papers you will either criticize these films in their portrayal of violence or analyze them with the concepts we discussed in class. (30%)

Final Exam: On readings and films, consists of short and long answer questions. (50%)

Participation: This is not a lecture course and your contributions are valued greatly. There is no right or wrong view with regards to these controversial films. The class discussions will help you share your views with me and other students. I will take attendance only to learn your names, being in class **on time** and participating is your responsibility as a college student. (20%)

Tentative Schedule:

Week 1 (Jan 24& 26):

Syllabus, introduction, reading: Bazin, "The Evolution of the Language of Cinema"

Week 2 (Jan 31& Feb 2)

Reading: Kracauer, pp. 27-73 and 157-171

Week 3 (Feb 7& 9)

Film: Rope, discussions

Reading: Mayne, pp. 13-52

Week 4 (Feb 14& 16)

Clips from Hitchcock films, Hitchcock as an auteur

Readings: Sarris, "Notes on Auteur Theory"

Wollen, "Auteur Theory"

Wood, "Ideology, Genre, Auteur"

Week 5 (Feb 21& 23)

Film: Blue Velvet, discussions

Week 6 (Feb 28& Mar 2)

1st paper due on Thursday

Readings: Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema"

Freud, "The Uncanny" (and Hoffman, The Sandman)

Week 7 (Mar 7& 9)

Film: Ali: Fear Eats the Soul, discussions

Readings: Mayne, pp. 53-105

Week 8 (Mar 14& 16) SPRING BREAK

Week 9 (Mar 21& 23)

Film: Ali: Fear Eats the Soul, discussions

Readings: Sontag, "On Camp"

Mayne, pp. 157-173

Foucault, "Panopticism"

Week 10 (Mar 28& 30)

Film: Funny Games, discussions

Week 11 (Apr 4& 6)

2nd paper due on Thursday

Readings: Sontag, "Regarding the Pain of Others"

Week 12 (Apr 11& 13) NO CLASS

Week 13 (Apr 18& 20)

Film: Persona, discussions

Week 14 (Apr 25& 27)

Reading: Bordwell, "The Art Cinema as a Mode of Film Practice"

Kracauer, pp. 175-193

Week 15 (May 2& 4)

Film: Brazil, discussions

Reading: Weber, selections from Essays in Sociology

Week 16 (May 9& 11)

3rd paper due Tuesday

Conclusion and wrap-up