

Jewish Images, German Films

Course #: GRS/ILC 394

Room: Norman James Theater, Smith Hall

Class times: TTh 10–11:15

Film viewing: Th evening 7-9

Prof.: James Martin

Office: Goldstein 115

Office Hours: MWF 10-11, 12:30-1:30

TTh 2:30-4

E-mail: jmartin6@washcoll.edu

Telephone: x 5705

Course Description:

An overview of German films that portray a Jewish subject matter with special emphasis on German history and the Holocaust. The course begins by exploring visual and narrative analysis through two of the most famous films of the Weimar Republic, *Nosferatu* and *M*. We then examine how stylistic elements from these films were carried over directly into the anti-Semitic propaganda of the Nazi era. As we progress through the postwar period, students discuss issues of guilt, remembrance and avoidance in reference to German filmmakers' representation of Jewish characters and stories. The course covers various genres including concentration camp films, documentaries, personal and family histories. Each week theoretical texts are employed to provoke debate on the aesthetic and ethical issues involved.

Texts:

Timothy Corrigan, *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*. Longman, 5th edition, 2003. (overview of basic film terminology and tips on writing about film)

Peter Neville, *The Holocaust*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

(brief history of the Holocaust, the events leading up to and issues thereafter)

Course Reader: Short texts and excerpts from German film criticism and theories of Holocaust representation.

Films:

Nosferatu, 1922, dir. F.W. Murnau

M, 1931, dir. Fritz Lang

The Eternal Jew, 1940, dir. Fritz Hippler

Jew Süß, 1940, dir. Veit Harlan

Murderers Among Us, 1946, dir. Wolfgang Staudte

Night and Fog, 1955, dir. Alain Resnais

The Tin Drum, 1979, dir. Volker Schlöndorff

Europa, Europa, 1990, dir. Agnieszka Holland

Theresienstadt: Gateway to Auschwitz, 1993, dir. Thomas Fantl

My Mother's Courage, 1995, dir. Michael Verhoeven

Comedian Harmonists, 1997, dir. Joseph Vilsmaier

Aimee and Jaguar, 1999, dir. Max Färberböck

Nowhere in Africa, 2001, dir. Caroline Link

Attendance Policy: Because the class only meets twice a week it is crucial that everyone attends class and keeps up with the material. Students are allowed 2 unexcused absences for any reason (health, sports, family, personal) throughout the semester. Any absence beyond this limit will result in the final course grade dropping by one grade, i.e. A to A-, B- to C+, etc. Any exception to this policy requires serious, documented cause such as in the case of hospitalization or a college-sanctioned, regular season sporting event. During absences it is the student's responsibility to obtain any missed assignments.

Film Viewings: In addition to regular class attendance, students will participate in communal viewings of the scheduled films on a weekly basis. These will be held Thursday evening from 7 – 9 PM. It is important to remember that these films were intended to be seen at public viewings and to cause audience reactions. These reactions filter out into public discourse through discussions, debates, reviews and criticisms. Our public forum will be classroom discussions in which we debate the ethical and aesthetic issues raised by the films, analyze specific scenes/images and formulate theses and arguments.

Class Participation: In addition to the communal showing students are **required** to take out the course movies from Library reserves and watch them individually or in groups over the weekend. This will offer you more time to reflect upon and analyze the films, as well as providing the basis for discussion. In each of the course's 4 units there will also be brief theoretical and critical readings intended to provide a framework or catalyst for debate. Classroom participation means not only being in class, but also being prepared to engage in discussion by having completed all viewings and readings.

Digital Filmmaking Assignments: One of the goals of this course is to teach students the technical aspects of film so that they may be applied in the analysis of individual movies. In order to better understand film technique, students themselves will get behind the camera and replicate specific shots, edits and sequences from the course movies. We will begin with DV camera and iMovie training sessions in the second week. Students will work in teams to complete two video assignments: a one-minute introductory and then five-minute midterm sequence.

Writing Assignments: As the semester progresses the course focuses more on historical, ethical and aesthetic content. In addition to the occasional, brief written homework, there will be two lengthier writing tasks. The assignments are intended as position papers in which the students put forth a thesis and then present arguments and evidence based on the film viewings, theoretical texts and class discussions. All of the papers will be written in process writing including a preliminary outline, draft and final revision. Based on feedback given at each stage of the writing process, students are expected to significantly alter and improve their writing. Students should plan on scheduling a consultation with the Writing Center for their final papers.

Grade Distribution:		Class participation & Homework	30%
Intro Video Assignment	10%	Midterm Video Assignment	15%
1 st Written Assignment	20%	Final Written Assignment	25%

Class Schedule:

Week 1- Introduction

Aug 30. Explanation of syllabus
Sep. 1 *Film Chap. 1, 2*

Week 2- DV Filmmaking

Sep. 6 Camera Training
Sep. 8 iMovie Training
* 1 st DV Mini-Project *

I. Weimar Film and Nazi Propaganda

Week 3- Visual Analysis, *Nosferatu*

Sep. 13 *Film Chap. 2,*
Sep. 15 *Film 3:55-69*

Week 4- Narrative Analysis, *M*

Sep. 20 *Film 3:35-42*
Sep. 22 *Kaes*

Week 5- Character Development, *Jew Süß*

Sep. 27 *Holocaust 1, 2*
Sep. 29 *Rentschler*

Week 6- Comparison, *The Eternal Jew*

Okt. 4 *Holocaust 3, Film 3:42-46,*
Okt. 6 *Hornshøj-Møller*

II. Trümmer, Trauma and Tin Drums

Week 7- Mise-en-Scène, *Murderers Among Us*

Okt. 11 *Holocaust 4, Film 3:46-54*
Okt. 13 *-frei - Herbstferien*

Week 8- Holocaust Images, *Night & Fog*

Okt. 18 *Holocaust 5*
Okt. 20 *Hirsch*

Week 9- Aesthetic Responses, *The Tin Drum*

Okt. 25 *Film 5*
Okt. 27 *Santner*
• Midterm DV Project *

III. Geschichte = Story/History

Week 10- Survivor Stories, *Europa, Europa*

Nov. 1 *Film 4*

Nov. 3 *Hartmann*

Week 11- Oral History, *Theresienstadt: Gateway to Auschwitz*

Nov. 8 *Film 6:124-38*

Nov. 10 *Selection of Poems and Art*

Week 12- Postmodern Truth/s, *My Mother's Courage*

Nov. 15 *Holocaust Chap. 8*

Nov. 17 *Feinberg*

*** 1st Written Assignment ***

IV. Hollywood and the Holocaust

Week 13- Shoah Business, *Comedian Harmonists*

Nov. 22 *Holocaust 7, Faurisson*

Nov. 24 *- frei - Erntedankfestferien*

Week 14- Drag and Desire, *Aimee and Jaguar*

Nov. 29 *Film 6:139-53,*

Dez. 1 *Fischer, Sieg*

Week 15- Going Global, *Nowhere in Africa*

Dez. 6 *Film Chap. 7*

Dez. 8 *Göktürk, Gutberlet*

*** Final Written Assignment ***