

FI352-15 Film History and Methods

24/25

Department

SCAPVC - Film & Television Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Matt Denny

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module will focus on film and history, exploring the various ways film texts have been analysed as reflecting social and cultural historical moments, filmmaking movements of particular eras, and how films have historicised individuals and events. There are many ways to 'do' film history and this term will not be an exhaustive survey of the history of cinema. Instead, it will offer some key contexts, methodologies, and traditions that have formed the wide-ranging study of film and history.

The exact content of the module in any given year will depend on the expertise and research interests of the module convenor.

The following is one example, divided into three parts:

- Part I will consider how cinema has evolved in selective eras with an emphasis on periods of revision and rebirth (such as the French New Wave and British New Wave movements);
- Part II will investigate how history intersects with theoretical concepts in Film Studies, such as national cinema (Bollywood) and genre or stardom;
- Part III will examine film as a historical object, representing specific people and eras through the study of filmic examples of the Civil Rights era in 1960's America.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

- To provide an appreciation of film history through important eras
- To understand how to methodologically study film and history
- To provide the means for students to engage with key theorists and key texts in relation to film and history
- To access some of the traditions that have formed the study of film and history

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Film and History: Approaches and Methodologies

Film: M (Fritz Lang, 1931)

Part I: Eras of Revision and Rebirth

Week 2: French New Wave

Film: The 400 Blows (François Truffaut, 1959)

Week 3: British New Wave

Film: A Touch of Honey (Tony Richardson, 1961)

Part II: Theory and Concepts

Week 4: History and National Cinema: Indian Cinema

Film: Monsoon Wedding (Mira Nair, 2001)

Week 5: History and Genre: Heritage Cinema

Film: Room With a View (James Ivory, 1985)

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: History and Hollywood Studios: Disney

Film: Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (David Hand and all, 1937)

Part III: Film as History: Civil Rights Era

Week 8: The Defiant Ones (Stanley Kramer, 1958)

Week 9: Mississippi Burning (Alan Parker, 1988)

Week 10: Selma (Ava DuVernay, 2015)

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the development of film history as a way to study film

- Identify key theorists and key texts in film history
- Consider social and cultural history in relation to film
- Assess film history through key theoretical debates about film and history
- Understand the diversity of film history studies

Indicative reading list

Andrew, Dudley (1998) 'Film and History' in Hill, John and Pamela Church Gibson (eds.) *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 176-189.

Chapman, James, Mark Glancy and Sue Harper (eds.) (2007) *The New Film History: Sources, Methods, Approaches* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan)

Cook, Pam (ed) (2008) *The Cinema Book*, 2nd Edition (London: BFI)

Cripps, Thomas (1993) *Making Movies Black: The Hollywood Message Movie from World War II to the Civil Rights Era* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Grainge, Paul, Jancovich, Mark and Monteith, Sharon (2007) *Film Histories: An Introduction and Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press)

Higson, Andrew (2006) 'Re-presenting the National Past: Nostalgia and Pastiche in the Heritage Film' in Friedman, Lester (ed.) *Fires Were Started: British Cinema and Thatcherism*, 2nd Edition (London and New York: Wallflower), pp. 91-109.

Kracauer, Siegfried (1947) *From Caligari to Hitler* (Princeton: Princeton University Press)

Landy, Marcia (ed.) (2001) *The Historical Film: History and Memory in Media* (London: Athlone Press)

Lay, Samantha (2002) '1950s and 1960s: Social Problems and Kitchen Sinks' in *British Social Realism: From Documentary to Brit Grit* (London: Wallflower), pp. 55-69.

Letort, Delphine (2019) 'The Historical Record and the American Imaginary: Adapting History in *Selma*', *Black Camera* 10:2, pp. 195-210.

Monk, Claire (2002) 'The British Heritage-Film Debate Revisited' in Monk, Claire and Sargeant, Alexander (eds.) *British Historical Cinema*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 176-178.

Murphy, Robert (2014) 'New Morning: Optimism and Resilience in Tony Richardson's *A Taste of Honey* and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*', *Journal of British Cinema and Television* 11:2/3, pp. 378-396.

Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey (1996) *The Oxford History of World Cinema* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Pallant, Chris (2011) *Demystifying Disney: A History of Disney Feature Animation* (London: Bloomsbury)

Strachan, Ian Gregory and Mia Mask (eds.) (2015) *Poitier Revisited: Reconsidering a Black Icon in the Obama Age* (New York and London: Bloomsbury)

Thompson, Kristin and Bordwell, David (2010) Film History: An Introduction. (New York: McGraw-Hill)

Wells, Paul (1998) Understanding Animation (London: Routledge)

Yeakey, Lamont H. (2019) 'Introduction: The Film and History of Selma, Alabama, 1965', Black Camera 10: 2, pp. 159-183.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

This module develops skills of audio-visual literacy, through historical and textual analysis of the moving image. It develops the student's understanding of historical frameworks that have been relevant to cinema.

Transferable skills

critical and analytical thinking

independent research skills

teamwork

clarity and effectiveness of communication- written and oral

accurate and persuasive writing

audio-visual literacy

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Other activity	18 hours (12%)
Placement	114 hours (76%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Other activity description

Weekly in class screenings

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Essay 1	40%	60 hours	Yes (extension)

Essay 1 will focus on the first few weeks of the module. It will focus on the films/topics covered in those weeks with the students writing, specifically, on one of the films.

Essay 2	60%	90 hours	Yes (extension)
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Essay 2 will focus on the conceptual weeks in the second part of the module. There will be a list of questions that students can choose from and these will be distributed in the second part of the module. This essay will allow students to focus on more than one film/topic/subject, if they choose.

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback sheets and annotated essays

Availability

Post-requisite modules

If you pass this module, you can take:

- FI264-15 Issues in Documentary (Year 2)
- FI345-15 Television Case Studies (Final Year)
- FI266-15 Special Topic: Case Studies in Film and/or Television (Year 2)
- FI207-15 Television Case Studies (Year 2)
- FI208-15 Silent Cinema
- FI249-15 Hollywood Cinema
- FI326-15 Issues in Documentary
- FI367-15 US Comedy Television
- FI263-15 British Screens
- FI204-15 World Cinema

- FI262-15 Transnational Action Cinema (Year 2 Option)
- FI358-15 The Art of Animation
- FI364-15 Film Seriality and Franchising

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UFRA-R1WA Undergraduate French with Film Studies
- Year 1 of UGEA-RP33 Undergraduate German with Film Studies
- Year 1 of UHPA-RP43 Undergraduate Hispanic Studies with Film Studies
- Year 1 of UITA-R3W5 Undergraduate Italian with Film Studies