

# History of Cinema

CST 201; Sec 70

Cedar Crest College; Fall 2009

T 7-10:00 PM; Room: MIL 33

Format: Lecture, Discussion, & Online

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“Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world.”

--Jean-Luc Godard



Machinenmensch & Inventor in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927)

**Course Description:** CST 240 History of Cinema surveys major developments in international film culture and aesthetics from 1895 to the present. Topics include the origins of motion pictures and growth during the silent era; the development of narrative cinema; European innovations such as Soviet montage theory or German Expressionism; the rise and influence of sound; the Hollywood studio system; global trends such as post-WWII Japanese, Indian, or Hong Kong films; and the independent, experimental, and media-conglomerate cinemas of today.

## Books & Course Resources:

Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell. *Film History: An Introduction*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2009.

Timothy Corrigan. *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*. 7<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Pearson Longman, 2009.

(Recommended, especially if you have not had CST 130: Introduction to Film or a similar film studies course.)

The above books are available through the Cedar Crest College Bookstore but may also be purchased from other vendors. Online retailers (such as [www.betterworldbooks.com](http://www.betterworldbooks.com) or [www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com)) often sell books at reduced prices.

You'll also want access to the course's eCollege companion website, which will have digital copies of course materials. We'll also be using the eCollege site's threaded discussion features to extend our classroom discussions online. The site is accessed at: [www.cedarcrestonline.net](http://www.cedarcrestonline.net). To login, you'll need a user ID and password issued to you from the Cedar Crest Registrar's Office, sent to your Cedar Crest email account upon first registering for an eCollege or eCompanion course.

Your writing for the course should follow the MLA format, so you'll want to have access to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* or a style manual that covers the MLA style. (Corrigan's *Guide to Writing about Film* covers the MLA style.) An online companion to Diana Hacker's *Research and Documentation in the Electronic Age*, which covers the MLA and research in the Humanities, is available at: [www.dianahacker.com/resdoc](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc). See also my "Guidelines for Writing about Literature and Film."

DVD copies of films we'll be screening this semester are available from commercial vendors, and Cedar Crest's Cressman has many available for viewing.

**Course Outcomes:** The goal of our study together will be to develop an understanding of cinematic history. You'll also come away with a range of interpretative strategies for understanding film conventions and terminology. Here, then, are the skills that I hope you'll gain by the end of the course:

- You'll have a knowledge of historical trends in the development of film technology, culture, and aesthetics.
- You'll have an understanding of the cultural significance of film, both a movie's importance for its original audience and how we understand it today.
- You'll be familiar with a range of film study terminology and the methods by which film scholars analyze a film.
- You'll be able to express your interpretations of a film both verbally (in class discussions) and in writing (online journals, exams, and papers).
- You'll be able to write critical analyses of a film in clear, cogent prose.

**Course Methods and Assessment:** The best way to develop a sense of film history is to watch a broad number of films from different cultures and historical moments. Much of our time each week, then, will be spent screening historically important films and discussing their cultural and aesthetic significance, both in class and via our online journal discussions. Readings from our textbook *Film History* have been selected to provide a context for understanding our film screenings and engaging in class discussions. You'll be assessed in History of Cinema through weekly in-class discussion participation, regular online journals (designed to continue class discussion on reading and lecture material as well as processing spectator response to a film), three exams (designed to synthesize course readings, lectures, and discussions toward an understanding of film's historical and cultural significance), and a final analytical paper (6-8 pages; designed to offer an in-depth analysis of one film from the semester).

See further down the syllabus for specifics on assignments, due dates, and participation assessment.

**Honor Philosophy:** The Cedar Crest Honor Philosophy states that students shall uphold community standards for academic and social behavior to preserve a learning environment dedicated to personal and academic excellence. It is based upon the principle that, as a self-governing body, students have the ability to create an atmosphere of trust and support. Within this environment, individuals are empowered to make their own decisions, develop personal regard for the system under which they live, and achieve a sense of integrity and judgment that will guide them through life.

**Classroom Behavior and Protocol:** You're both encouraged and expected to share your understandings of the films we'll be discussing together. By sharing our interpretations, my hope is that each of us will develop sharper and more widely considered understandings of cinema history. A discussion—like any conversation worth having—requires both talking and listening, so I ask that we treat each other's contributions with their deserved respect, consider one another's interpretations with an open mind, and not attempt to impose a particular point of view on our classmates. You should argue for a particular line of interpretation to which you're committed, but do so with an openness to other ideas and a respect for disagreement.

Since we'll be spending a good amount of time this semester sitting in the dark and watching movies, it's appropriate to make note of good classroom film-watching etiquette. While you may certainly laugh, weep, or shriek when appropriate, keep those outbursts to the clowns, tragedians, and monsters on screen, not in the seats around us. No one likes a shushing, neither the shusher nor the shushee.

Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest Honor Philosophy. Such behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distractions such as late arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations, and any other behaviors that might disrupt instruction or otherwise compromise students' access to their Cedar Crest College education.

As we live in an age of increasing technological diversion—the call of cell phones, or the click of mice, ringing in our ear—it becomes easy to forget the good manners of paying attention to those immediately around us. Please remember to silence cell phones and refrain from texting your friends or any wayward browsing of the Internet during class.

**Attendance:** Simply put, you must attend class.

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:** You are expected to be honest and truthful in this class. Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's ideas or words and passing them off as your own without giving credit to the original source. Since a key goal of a college education is to develop and express your own ideas, plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offense. Here's the official college policy, which stands for this class:

It is dishonest to present oral or written work that is not entirely the student's own, except as may be approved by the instructor. Students must follow the requirements of the instructor regarding when and how much collaboration with other students is permitted. Any language taken from another source, whether individual words or entire paragraphs, must be placed in quotation marks and attributed to the source, following the citation format specified. Paraphrased material from an outside source must also be attributed. In addition, if the student is indebted to another source for a specific perspective or a line of argument—regardless of whether the student has directly quoted the source or not—that debt must be acknowledged.

In this class, the penalty for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty is a grade of F either on the individual assignment or for the entire course, to be determined by the instructor based upon the severity of the offense. All cases of plagiarism will be kept on record with Cedar Crest College's Provost Office.

**Class Cancellation:** If Cedar Crest's campus is open, you should expect our class meetings to be held. If troublesome weather threatens to close the campus and thus cancel class, you should refer to Cedar Crest's Inclement Weather Hotline at 610-606-4629 for notification. Of course, you should always use common sense and place your safety first when determining whether or not it's appropriate for you to drive to campus under such conditions. If I cancel class independently of the campus closing, due to weather or for other reasons, I will send a class-wide email to your Cedar Crest account and (if possible) place an outgoing message on my office voicemail (x3474).

**College Policy Regarding Learning Disabilities:** Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with me during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact Academic Services.

**Assignment Format:** All formal out-of-class assignments must be typewritten, stapled, and double-spaced with a 12-pt Times New Roman font and one-inch margins. Syntactically correct American English should be used. You don't need a cover page or fancy binder, but be certain to include your name, our class information, and a descriptive title on the first page.

**Deadlines and Lateness:** Assignments are due on the dates listed on the course schedule. If you're absent from class when a paper is due, it may be submitted via email ([rawilson@cedarcrest.edu](mailto:rawilson@cedarcrest.edu)) as an attached MSWord or RTF document. Please do not send assignments in a different format (WordPerfect, etc.) as they will not be counted as being received if I cannot open them: most word processing programs allow you to save files as either Word (.doc) or RTF (.rtf) documents. Assignments submitted past their due date will be reduced one letter grade (e.g. A to A-) for each 24-hour period they are late. Individual assignment extensions may be granted for extenuating circumstances (personal or family crisis, serious illness, roommate problems, etc.) but should be requested and explained as soon as possible. Computer problems are not acceptable excuses for extensions or lateness.

**Assignments:** We'll use the following assignments to work toward our goals as a class, and your final course grade will be determined along the following weights.

**Exams** (60% of Final Grade, 3 for 20% Each): You'll complete three exams during the semester. Exams will focus on assigned readings and in-class lecture and discussion material. Their format will include a series of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and essay questions that will ask you to synthesize interpretations of several films.

**Analytical Paper** (20% of Final Grade): You'll write one 6-8 page analytical paper on a film that we'll watch this semester. The paper will be due near the end of the course. See the "Analytical Paper Assignment" for details, as well as my handout, "Guidelines for Writing about Literature and Film."

**eCollege Discussion Board Participation** (10% of Final Grade): Weekly eCollege discussion board assignments ([www.cedarcrestonline.net](http://www.cedarcrestonline.net)) will supplement our in-class film screenings and discussions. Following each screening, you will post one response to the film and then post at least one reply to the observations of your classmates. Discussion board responses and replies are due in the week after a film is shown, before the next class. There will be no discussion board work for the weeks in which exams are due. See "Discussion Board Assignment" for details.

**In-Class Discussion Participation** (10% of Final Grade): For each class meeting, you are expected to participate in our discussion of the film we have watched. Your comments and questions should express a developing sense of the class interpretation the history of cinema, your own analyses of the films, and an understanding of the semester's readings. Participation will be evaluated once at mid-term and again at semester's end according to the below rubric.

Evaluation of Course Participation	
Grade	Criteria
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consistently raises thoughtful questions and proposes original ideas based upon course texts and concepts. Makes substantive connections, criticisms, and interpretations between multiple texts. Goes beyond those interpretations presented in lectures and readings.</li> <li>○ Regularly cites specific textual evidence (passages from the readings, scenes from a film, etc.). When offering reader-response to a text or drawing upon personal experience or anecdotal evidence, regularly bases those reactions in a clear understanding of how textual language and images operate.</li> <li>○ Regularly engaged in discussion with professor and classmates, and responds constructively to questions and alternative interpretations. Maintains consistent participation throughout the semester.</li> <li>○ Demonstrates excellent understanding of course texts and concepts.</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Frequently contributes to discussion with relevant points and questions drawn from course texts and concepts.</li> <li>○ Tends to cite specific textual evidence. May rely upon reader-response to a text, personal experience, or anecdotal evidence with a vague understanding of how textual language and images operate.</li> <li>○ Listens attentively to discussion with professor and classmates, and responds to questions and alternative interpretations. Maintains regular participation throughout the semester.</li> <li>○ Demonstrates good understanding of course texts and concepts.</li> </ul>
<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Infrequently contributes to discussion except when called upon, but contributions demonstrate familiarity with essential course texts and concepts.</li> <li>○ Occasionally cites textual evidence. Relies heavily upon unqualified reader-response to a text, personal experience, or anecdotal evidence without reference to how textual language and images operate.</li> <li>○ Listens to discussion with professor and classmates, but does not respond to questions or alternative interpretations. Participation variable throughout the semester.</li> <li>○ Demonstrates competent understanding of course texts and concepts.</li> </ul>
<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rarely contributes to class discussion except when called upon and contributions are off-topic and do not reference course texts and concepts.</li> <li>○ Does not cite textual evidence. Relies almost exclusively upon unqualified reader-response to a text, personal experience, or anecdotal evidence without reference to how textual language and images operate.</li> <li>○ Absent from several classes.</li> <li>○ Demonstrates unsatisfactory understanding of course texts and concepts.</li> </ul>
<b>F</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fails to contribute to class discussion.</li> <li>○ Absent from multiple classes.</li> <li>○ Demonstrates negligible understanding of course texts and concepts</li> </ul>

**Final Grade Assessment:** Assignments will carry the following weights relative to your final grade.

		Grades for the course will be issued according to the following percentages:
_____/200 pts	Exam 1	94-100%      A
_____/200 pts	Exam 2	90-93.99%    A-
_____/200 pts	Exam 3	87-89.99%    B+
_____/200 pts	Analytical Paper	84-86.99%    B
_____/100 pts	Online Film Journals	80-83.99%    B-
_____/50 pts	In-Class Participation 1	77-79.99%    C+
_____/50 pts	In-Class Participation 2	74-76.99%    C
		70-73.99%    C-
_____	/ 1000 <b>Total Points</b>	67-69.99%    D+
		60-66.99%    D
		0-59.99%      F

**Caveat:** We may need to alter the syllabus and schedule throughout the semester (cancelled classes, intriguing discussions, etc.)

### Course Schedule

Date	Lecture & Reading Assignment	Films
<b>Unit One: Silent Cinema (1895-1926)</b>		
8/26	INTRODUCTION: "READING" FILMS AS A SCHOLAR, WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A MOVIE AND HOW TO DISCUSS IT. "FILM HISTORY: <b>CHAPTER 4</b> (pp. 71-86)	<i>Amélie</i> (2002; Jean-Pierre Jeunet, dir; 122m)
9/2	EARLY CINEMA FROM NICKELODEONS TO EDISON'S STUDIOS & D. W. GRIFFITH AND THE RISE OF THE HOLLYWOOD FILM <i>Film History: Chapters 1-3</i> (pp 1-67) & <b>7</b> (pp 128-151) <i>A Short Guide to Writing about Film: Chapter 1</i> (pp 1-18) (Note that <i>Writing about Film</i> is an optional but recommended text. If you have not had a film studies course before, the text will provide a useful introduction to film terminology and strategies for writing about the films we screen.) <i>Are you registered for the classes you need? Today at 4PM is the end of the Add/Drop period.</i> Amélie Online Journal Due Note: The college is on break for Labor Day, Monday 9/7.	Actualities: <i>San Francisco, Aftermath of an Earthquake</i> (1906) Edison Kinetoscope Films (1894-1896): The Kiss & Serpentine Dances <i>The Great Train Robbery</i> (1903; Edwin S. Porter, dir; 12m) Scene from: <i>Goodfellas</i> (1990; Martin Scorsese, 146m) <i>Broken Blossoms</i> (1919; D. W. Griffith, dir; 90m)
9/9	SILENT STYLISTIC INNOVATIONS: GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM Dudley Andrew, "Amélie, or Le Fabuleux Destin de Cinéma Français" <i>Film Quarterly</i> 57.3 (Spring 2004): 34-46. (eCollege Document) <i>Film History: Chapter 5</i> (pp 87-104) <i>Writing about Film: Chapter 2</i> (pp 19-37) Broken Blossoms Online Journal Due	<i>Metropolis</i> (1927; Fritz Lang, dir; 124m) Scene from: <i>The Fifth Element</i> (1997; Luc Besson, dir; 126m)
9/16	G.W. PABST, THE NEW OBJECTIVITY, AND SOVIET MONTAGE <i>FILM HISTORY: CHAPTER 6 (105-127) &amp; CHAPTER 8</i> (pp 152-174) (Review commentary on Pabst, pp. 102-103) <i>Writing about Film: Chapter 3</i> (pp 38-86) Metropolis/October Online Journal Due	<i>Pandora's Box</i> (1929; G.W. Pabst, dir; 133m) Scene from: <i>October: Ten Days that Shook the World</i> (1927; Sergei Eisenstein, dir; 103m)
9/23	<b>Exam 1</b>	
	<i>Pandora's Box</i> Online Journal Due	
<b>Unit Two: Cinema &amp; Sound (1926-1960)</b>		
9/30	FILM & PROPAGANDA: THE CASE OF NAZI CINEMA <i>Film History: Chapters 9</i> (pp 177-194) & <b>12</b> (pp 239-258) <i>Writing about Film: Chapter 4</i> (pp 87-113)	Scenes from: <i>Triumph of the Will</i> (1935; Leni Reifenstahl, dir; 114m; segments) <i>Jud Süß</i> (1940; Veit Harlan, dir; 197m; segments) <i>Maedchen in Uniform</i> (1931; Leontine Sagan, dir; 98m; segments)
10/7	THE HOLLYWOOD STUDIO SYSTEM & THE GENRE FILM <i>Film History: Chapter 10</i> (pp 195-218) <i>Writing about Film: Chapter 5</i> (pp 114-132) Nazi Cinema Online Journal Due Note: The college's fall break is on 10/12 and 10/13.	<i>Adam's Rib</i> (1949; George Cukor, dir; 101m)
10/14	APOCALYPSE, POLITICS, & POST-WII JAPAN <i>Film History: Chapters 18 "Japan"</i> (pp 358-363) & <b>19 "Akira Kurosawa"</b> (pp 388-390) <i>Writing about Film: Chapter 6</i> (pp 133-163) <i>Adam's Rib</i> Online Journal Due	<i>Rashomon</i> (1950; Akira Kurosawa, dir; 88m)
10/21	AUTEURS VS. THE STUDIO SYSTEM: THE CASE OF WELLES <i>Film History: Chapters 15</i> (pp 298-323) & <b>19 "Auteur Theory" and "Authorship"</b> (pp 381-383) <i>Writing about Film: Chapter 7</i> (pp 164-181) <i>Rashomon</i> Online Journal Due Note: This evening the college celebrates President Ambar's inauguration with a campus	<i>Touch of Evil</i> (1958; Orson Welles, dir; 111m)

	discussion on the history of college education. If you'd like to attend, view <i>Touch of Evil</i> on your own (a copy is available at Cressman library). Also, no classes will be held on Friday 10/23 due to the inauguration ceremony.	
10/28	<b>Exam 2</b>	
<b>Unit Three: Contemporary Cinema (1960-Present)</b>		
11/4	<p style="text-align: center;">YOUNG EUROPE: A NEW WAVE OF CINEMA</p> <p><i>Film History: Chapter 20</i> (pp 403-432)  <i>Note:</i> 11/9 is the deadline for Course Withdrawal and now is a good time to gauge your performance in all of your classes.</p>	<i>Breathless</i> (1960; Jean-Luc Godard, dir; 87m)
11/11	<p style="text-align: center;">NEW HOLLYWOOD, NEW AUTEURS</p> <p><i>Film History: Chapter 22</i> (pp 472-493)  <i>Breathless</i> Online Journal Due</p>	<i>The Conversation</i> (1974; Francis Ford Coppola, dir; 113m)
11/18	<p style="text-align: center;">LATIN AMERICA &amp; CINEMA NÓVO</p> <p><i>Film History: Chapters 18 "Latin America"</i> (pp 377-380), <b>20 "Brazil: Cinema Nôvo"</b> (pp 434-438), <b>26 "South America and Mexico"</b> (pp 613-621), <i>Chapter 22</i> (pp 472-493), <b>Chapter 23 "Political Filmmaking in the Third World"</b> (pp. 494-511)  <i>The Conversation</i> Online Journal Due</p>	<i>Central Station</i> (1998; Walter Salles, dir; 113m) Scene from: <i>Black God, White Devil</i> (1964; Glauber Rocha, dir; 120m)
11/25	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK (11/15-11/29)	
12/2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Analytical Paper Due</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BOLLYWOOD TO HOLLYWOOD: INDIAN NATIONAL CINEMAS &amp; THE GLOBALIZATION OF FILM CULTURE</p> <p><i>Film History: Chapters 11, "India: An Industry Built on Music"</i> (pp. 235- 237), <b>18 "India"</b> (pp 373-377), <b>19 "Satyajit Ray"</b> (pp 399-402), <b>26 "India: Mass Output &amp; Art Cinema"</b> (pp 621-626), <b>Part Six: "Cinema in the Age of New Media"</b> (pp 659-728)  <i>Central Station/Black God, White Devil</i> Online Journal Due</p>	<i>Monsoon Wedding</i> (2001; Mira Nair, dir; 114m) Scene from: <i>Aparajito</i> ("The Unvanquished"; 1957; Satyajit Ray, dir; 110m; segment)
Finals Week	<b>Exam 3</b>	
	<b>Date, time, and location to be determined.</b>	