PHIL 199 – Perspectives on Philosophy of Film
University of Oregon
Spring, 2015

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Hours: 2:00-4:00, Wednesdays, or by Appt.

Course Description:

This one-credit course is designed to enable further reflection upon some of the more general or “meta” issues raised by the course of study followed in PHIL 332, Philosophy of Film. Among those issues that we will explore further, both through modest additional readings and writings and even some further engagement with films, are those that arise from the treatment of films as philosophical texts. How do we write about films as philosophy? How do we articulate their claims such that films may be brought into conversation with each other in the manner that written texts in the history of philosophy address each other? Do films “quote” or “cite” each other? Do they present arguments to counter those offered by other films? If so, do they do this only at the level of content, or might they be understood to converse with each other also at the level of form (color, sound, texture, speed, etc.)? If the latter, how can those arguments be treated in text such that they may inform philosophical reflection of a more conventional form? That is, how can such arguments be accounted for in text?

Some additional aspects of the course will aim to support your work as students of both film and philosophy in general, such as a guided tour of relevant resources online and at the Knight Library.

Required Texts:

All readings will be available for download from Blackboard.

Course Requirements and Grades:

- Attendance and Participation – This requires that one has read any assigned readings (50%)
- Small Weekly Writing Assignments (20%)
- 4-5 pg. Research and Writing Project (30%)

Accessibility:

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if aspects of the instruction or course design result in barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Office of Accessible Education in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu
Sexual Harassment and Assault:

The University of Oregon is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that all UO employees are required reporters. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO’s 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Read “Film Writing” from Filmosophy (2006) by Daniel Frampton

Week 2: Library visit including introduction to research methods in philosophy and film, detailing effective use of specific databases.

Week 3: Read “The Unbearable Lightness of Casablanca: A Defense of Committed Cosmopolitanism” by Steven Brence

Week 3: Discussion of “Notorious” as a critique of “Casablanca” – the reassertion of the problems of “little people” against the “big causes” and the limits of cosmopolitanism

Week 4: Read “Landscape and Longing in Sofia Coppola’s The Virgin Suicides” by Bree Hoskin

Week 5: Discussion of “Ghost World” and “The Virgin Suicides” on adolescence, adulthood, and nostalgia

Week 6: Read selection from “On Violence” from The Wretched of the Earth by Frantz Fanon
Week 7: Discussion of “The Island of Lost Souls” and “Moon” on the resilience of human self-possession.

Week 8: Read selections from *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes and *On the Origins of Inequality* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Week 9: Discussion of “Into the Wild” and “Vagabond” on the idea of a return to the state of nature as a form of liberation.

Week 10: Brief Project Presentations