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MAR 101L.51: Introduction to Media Arts

Vera N. Brunner-Sung

University of Montana - Missoula, vera.brunner-sung@umontana.edu

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MAR 101L Online

Introduction to Media Arts

Autumn 2013 - The University of Montana, Missoula

Professor Vera Brunner-Sung

email: vera.brunner-sung@mso.umt.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The **purpose** of the course is to introduce you to the analytical processes involved in “reading” film narrative. We will cover three major areas: fictional, documentary and experimental, as well as introducing the basic concepts behind media advertising. On a broader level this course delivers experiences that should help you expand your ability to think creatively, develop your ideas through collaborative and lateral thinking processes, articulate core meaning and thematic concepts in existing films and your own work, and finally, begin to understand the context behind your personal point-of-view and to look empathetically at other global cultures whose context may be quite different from your own.

GOALS

I. FILM LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURES

A successful student will be able to understand and clearly articulate their understanding of film stories through the following modes of analysis:

- THE THREE LEVELS OF READING
- THE FOUR COMPONENT AREAS
 - Dramatic
 - Filmic
 - Structural
 - Literary
- GENRE DESCRIPTION/CLASSIC PLOT MODELS
- NORTHRUP FRYE’S MODES OF NARRATIVE (HERO)
- ROBERT MCKEE’S STORY TRIANGLE
- FOUR MODES OF DOCUMENTARY

II. THE WORLD INSIDE—YOUR POINT-OF-VIEW AND CANONICAL STATE

Through these principles you will be able to articulate the nature of your “world view” as well as themes, characters and types of stories that might emerge from someone like yourself.

III. THE WORLD OUTSIDE—THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPATHY

By focusing on other cultures and their stories you will be able to compare and contrast your context with theirs and therefore open up your mind to what stories might mean to them and you.

IV. THE ESSENTIAL CORE—THEMATIC RESONANCE

If humankind is essentially a meaning-making life form, then you should leave this class with a much wider range of understanding in relation to the nature of core. *Theme and idea drive organization — surface vs core*

TEXT & MATERIALS

There is no required text for the class, but the class requires viewing of films that are to be your responsibility. This means having access to them via Netflix, Hulu, iTunes, Amazon Instant View, or otherwise. A list of vetted sources that have met our minimum standards for quality, will be provided to you. The rest of the course material is available in documents and video packages that will be found on our Moodle shell.

MAR 101L POINTS DISTRIBUTION

Assignments (12 @ 3pts.)	36 pts.
Weekly Forum (12 @ 3pts.)	36 pts.
Core Forum (weekly)	8 pts.
On-line Mid-term Essay Test	10 pts.
Online Final Multiple-Choice Test	10 pts.
Total Points for the semester	100 pts.

WEEKLY INSTRUCTIONS

There are a total of fifteen Weekly Units that are to be completed in sequential order. Each unit has video material, documents and, most weeks, a movie to view. This is not a small amount of material, so the best advice I have is: ***get started on your work early in the week and make sure to get movies lined up in advance!***

For the sake of consistency, each week will be structured in a similar manner:

Materials to study:

- 1) Murph Videos:** These instructional mini-lectures are from 3-6 minutes in length and get at the main focus of a given week's work. I highly recommend viewing each one at least twice—once before you read the week's documents and then once after!
- 2) Weekly documents:** These offer more detail than be contained in a short video and include the major vocabulary and concepts for the class.
- 3) Film Clips:** Sections of films referenced in the class live here in for purposes of re-viewing them.
- 4) Additional Resources:** This area gives you the opportunity to expand your research into film and additional topics generated through assignments and forums.

Weekly Activities:

- 1) Assignments (3 pts each).** Each week will have a written assignment due by Saturday night of that week by 11:55 pm. The criteria for each week and length of the assignment will be found through the link in the Assignment area for the week, where you will also upload completed work. Assignments are only accepted through Moodle; no e-mail.

****IMPORTANT****

When uploading assignments, ***use the following file formats only:***
.doc .docx .pdf .jpeg or Quicktime media files

When uploading assignments use the following **format for file name:**
FirstInitialLastname_Assign#.format

Example: My first assignment turned in as a Word Document for unit one should be:
VBrunner-Sung_Assign1.doc

2) Weekly Forums (3 pts each). *Each week* of the course, a discussion question will be posted for your response. A guide, clearly describing how you will be assessed, is available in the Syllabus area. This document should be **thoroughly reviewed!** The content of your response should reflect an in-depth study of that week's videos and reading materials. Discussions, as Assignments, are *due by Saturday night at 11:55pm for the week assigned.*

3) Core Forum (8 pts total): This forum spans the entire semester. A grade will be entered at mid-term and at the end of the semester, with total of 4 points available for each grading period. The forum will deal with issues and questions generated by viewing the series *The Story of Film: An Odyssey*, as well as questions generated by the instructor and students.

Two online tests are only events that separate from this pattern:

- 1) **Mid-term short answer essay test (10 pts)**
- 2) **Final multiple choice test (10 pts)**

!!!!>>>>DEADLINES AND LATE WORK<<<<!!!!

Each week's work is to be completed DURING THAT WEEK! *IF YOU MISS A FORUM DEADLINE, YOU WILL RECEIVE NO CREDIT.* If you turn an ASSIGNMENT in during the week after it is due, you may receive up to (i.e., a MAXIMUM) of 50% of the points for that assignment. However, **NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THAT "GRACE WEEK."**

INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY

If you have questions about the syllabus or schedule, VISIT THE Q&A FORUM located in the syllabus section of our Moodle site. Over the course of the semester, you may contact me with questions/concerns via email, and I will do my best to respond **WITHIN 48 HOURS.** That means, *if you write me a question about an assignment on a Thursday, you may not hear from me in time to finish the assignment by the Saturday deadline.* Be organized, start early!

A NOTE ON VIEWING FILMS!! VERY IMPORTANT!!

We are in a brave new world of the film "experience." All of the movies we will be viewing this term were intended to be watched in the company of strangers, in a darkened theater. YOU, however, can watch them on your computer, and if you have a laptop, tablet, or smartphone, you could be just about anywhere – your livingroom, a café, the back of a car. Out of respect for the films, filmmakers, and your own education (which, after all, is a big part of what we are all here for), please be a conscientious viewer. Minimize distractions: turn off your phone, close the door, dim the lights. Use full screen. Do your best to watch these films without interruptions, as they were intended to be seen. You'll be glad you did!

THE ACADEMIC CODE

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. Review the Code online: <http://www.umt.edu/SA/vpsa/index.cfm/page/1339>

STUDENTS NEEDING ACCOMMODATIONS SHOULD INFORM THE INSTRUCTOR

Students with disabilities who may need accommodations for this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact Disability Services for Students (DSS) early in the semester so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible. Students may contact DSS by visiting the Center (located in the Lommasson Center Room 154) or by phoning 243-2243 (voice) or e-mailing dss@umontana.edu. All information will remain confidential.

MEDIA ARTS 101L sec 50-51
WEEKLY SCHEDULE - FALL 2013 (4 pages)

<p>Week #1 Aug. 26</p>	<p>Story, Culture and Meaning-Making (What is Core?) Read: Word-Docs: Story and Meaning-making, 3 Levels of Reading, 4 C's Extended Analysis View: Murph Videos 1-2-3 ("Intro Core," "3 Levels of Reading," "The Canonical State,") and the 4-Triangle/Square Animation</p> <p style="text-align: right;">----- Forum #1: Triangle/Square Animation—Story, yes or no? Assignment #1: Your Own Canonical Story</p>
<p>Week #2 Sep. 2</p>	<p>Editing: The Language of Film (Nature of Language) Read: Word-Docs: Editing and Film Grammar, Pudovkin v. Eisenstein, Shot Sizes, Aspect Ratio View: Murph Video 5—"Editing" ++The Story of Film: An Odyssey, Ep. 1: "The Birth of Cinema"</p> <p style="text-align: right;">----- Forum #2: Mamet's "Where do we put the camera?" exercise Assignment #2: Find Pudovkin v. Eisenstein clips and articulate</p>
<p>Week #3 Sep. 9</p>	<p>Genre, Plot, Structure (Development and Lateral Thinking) Read: Word-Docs: Genre + Plot Types, Categories of Hero, Characteristics of Film Noir, The Ugly Duckling View: Murph Videos 6-7-8 ("Narrative, Plot, Story" "Genre", "Development/Plot Types"), ++The Story of Film: An Odyssey, Ep. 4 "The Arrival of Sound" Film: <i>Brick</i> (2005) dir. Rian Johnson,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">----- Forum #3: <i>The Ugly Duckling</i>: Genre Scenarios in groups Assignment #3: Identify the elements of Film Noir in <i>Brick</i>. Also, describe the protagonist in terms of Frye's Categories of Hero.</p>
<p>Week #4 Sep. 16</p>	<p>The Whole Story—Structural Components (In Film/In Life) Read: Word-Doc: 4 C's Component Area. McKee Triangle View: Murph Video 9: Structure and Patterns Film: <i>Casablanca</i> (1942) dir. Michael Curtiz</p> <p style="text-align: right;">----- Forum #4: <i>Casablanca</i> and the world of structure Assignment #4: Pick a character and articulate their character development and how that is related to structure.</p>
<p>Week #5 Sep. 23</p>	<p>The Whole Story—Dramatic Action Components (Relationships) Read: Word-Doc: Formalism v. Realism pt.1 View: Murph Video 10: "Formalism/Realism" Film: <i>Wendy and Lucy</i> (2008) dir. Kelly Reichardt</p> <p style="text-align: right;">----- Forum #5: How is <i>Wendy and Lucy</i> different from <i>Casablanca</i> in terms of what we've learned so far? Assignment #5: a) (due this week) Describe a scene from your life and discuss</p>

	<p>it in terms of dramatic action. b) (<i>due in two weeks</i>) Rework your Canonical Story using Genre and 3-act structure</p>
<p>Week #6 Sep. 30</p>	<p>The Whole Story—Literary Components (Metaphor) Read: Word-Doc: Formalism v. Realism pt. 2 View: Murph Video 10: “Formalism/Realism” Film: <i>The Piano</i> (1993) dir. Jane Campion</p> <hr/> <p>Forum #6: Bring Formalist clips to the Forum and discuss with classmates Assignment #6: View <i>The Piano</i>, analyze a scene for Dramatic Action and shots.</p>
<p>Week #7 Oct. 7</p>	<p>MID-TERM WRITING: ASSIGNMENT #5 Developed and Due! ONLINE MID-TERM SHORT FORM ESSAY!</p>
<p>Week #8 Oct. 17</p>	<p>Beyond the Classical—New Structures, Principles and Cultures Read: Docs: “Culture, Philosophy and the Canonical State.” View: Murph Video 11: “Context, Culture and Form” View: “What is Neorealism,” by kogonada for <i>Sight & Sound</i>: https://vimeo.com/68514760 Murph Video 11: “Post WWII Canonical Shifts: Japan” ++<i>The Story of Film: An Odyssey</i>, Ep. 5: “Post-war Cinema” Film: <i>Ikiru</i>, dir. Akira Kurosowa (1952)</p> <hr/> <p>Forum #7: a) What is the history of Japan that led to the creation of the film? b) If you were to write a social drama based in Realism what issues would you want to explore? Assignment #7: Analyze <i>Ikiru</i> from the point of view of McKee’s Triangle Frye’s Hero Types, Genres, Plots and Structures</p>
<p>Week #9 Oct. 21</p>	<p>Beyond the Classical—Trends in Formalism (The Existential Auteur) Read: Doc: “The Auteur and Subjectivity” View: Murph Video 12: “The Formalist Auteur and Existentialism” ++<i>The Story of Film: An Odyssey</i>, Ep. 7: “European New Wave” Film: <i>Vertigo</i>, dir. Alfred Hitchcock (1958)</p> <hr/> <p>Forum #8: What are unique themes from your life that might be interesting in a film story? What did Hitchcock use in his film that was personal? Assignment #8: View <i>Vertigo</i>, and analyze a scene for D.A and shots</p>
<p>Week #10 Oct. 28</p>	<p>From Classical to Post-Modern—(Self-Reflexivity and New Structures) Read: Doc: “Post-modernism and Self-Reflexivity in Film” View: Murph Video 13: “The Post-Modern in Film: Irony Takes Hold?” ++<i>The Story of Film: An Odyssey</i>, Ep. 14: “New American Independents and the</p>

	<p>Digital Revolution" Film: <i>Run Lola Run</i> (1998) dir. Tom Tykwer</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">Forum #9: Discuss Self-Reflexivity, Post-Modernism and Philosophy in relation to <i>Run Lola Run</i> Assignment #9: Rework Canonical Story using principles of Post-modernism.</p>
<p>Week #11 Nov. 4</p>	<p>Meanwhile, Back at Reality Ranch (Creative Truth) Read: Doc: Documentary Modes pt.1 View: This week you'll view a series of short video clips taken from interviews with documentary filmmakers. Visit: http://films.nfb.ca/capturing-reality/#/39/</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Under the "topics" tab, choose "Exploring the Genre." Select "What is Documentary?" and view the 5 clips. 2. Return to the "topics" tab and "Exploring the Genre" again. Select "Cinema Verité: The Fly on the Wall" and watch the 6 video clips. 3. Return to the "topics" tab, choose "Truth, Perspective & Ethics." Select "Truth," and view the 4 clips. <p>Film: <i>Salesman</i> (1968), dir. Albert Maysles, David Maylses and Charlotte Zwerin</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">Forum #10: Do you think documentary can be objective? Is <i>Salesman</i> an objective film? What ethical issues can you see in the film? Assignment #10: Analyze <i>Salesman</i> using you understanding of the canonical state, structures and genre.</p>
<p>Week #12 Nov. 11</p>	<p>Post-Modern Documentary (Reflexivity) Read: Doc: Documentary Modes pt.2" View: Murph Video 14: "From the Voice of God to the Voice of Everyone" Films for Week 12-13: <i>The Fog of War</i> (2003), dir. Errol Morris; <i>The Gleaners and I</i> (2000) dir. Agnes Varda.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">Forum #11: What are Varda and Morris's films about? In what ways are they meaningful? Assignment #11: Discuss the strategies and structures of Morris and Varda's films, and explain why you think they are truthful.</p>
<p>Week #13 Nov. 18</p>	<p>THANKSGIVING WEEK</p>
<p>Week #14 Nov. 25</p>	<p>Poetic realities: experimental films Read: What IS experimental film?" View: Murph Video 15: "Outsiders and Manifestos" Films: <i>Fake Fruit Factory</i> (1986) dir. Chick Strand; <i>Castro Street</i> (1966) dir. Bruce Baillie; <i>Diary</i> (2010) dir. Tim Hetherington.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">Forum #12: Which of the three films captivated you the most, and why? What are these films about? Are they "documentary"?</p>

	<p>Assignment #12: <u>On last time</u>, look at your canonical story over the course of the semester. Where might it fit in best of all the areas we've ventured into and why?</p>
<p>Week #15 Dec. 2</p>	<p>Eisenstein and the Semiotics of the Television Commercial Read: Doc: The Return of Eisenstein: Coding in Commercials View: Murph Video 16: "Coded Canonicals" Assignment 13: For a possible 3 extra credit points discuss how your view of film has changed and what you've learned in this class!</p>
<p>Thur. Dec. 12</p>	<p>FINALS DUE</p>

How to Succeed in Forum Discussions: 3 points (12 total, 36points total—THAT IS 25% OF YOUR GRADE FOR THE SEMESTER!

Rubric for Threaded Discussions

Ranking	0 No Learner Engagement	1 Low Learner Engagement	2 Moderate Learner Engagement	3 High Learner Engagement
Discussion Content	Avoidance and B.S. Level	Basic Knowledge and Comprehension Level	Reflective-Application and Analysis Level	Critically Thinking-Synthesis and Evaluation Level
Unit post	<p>You either don't post at all, or your contribution reflects no knowledge or comprehension of the materials for the week and/or you regurgitate the content of classmates' previously posted ideas/insights, without elaboration or critical engagement. Typical responses that warrant 0 pts.:</p> <p>"Great Jane. I agree with you."</p> <p>"My opinion is...(as in, I haven't read or studied but I can fake my way through it.)"</p> <p>"I disagree with you...(then I throw in an opinion as in the above)</p> <p>--or any version of using terminology for the course incorrectly just to use it.</p>	<p>You restate ideas or issues from the readings and videos. You offer examples from the week's viewing to support your understanding of the materials. You either don't engage with others or revert to the responses offered in the column to the left.</p>	<p>You accomplish Basic Knowledge and Comprehension. In addition you describe insights based on integration of past and current readings outside of the week's documents. You may agree or disagree, but you expand on the idea with examples from viewings or other sources. You demonstrate further analysis and insight. You recommend examples or other sources of information. You extend the conversation with peers.</p>	<p>You accomplish Basic Knowledge and Comprehension as well as Reflective Application and Analysis. You also construct new meaning and application to the material. This includes applying learning to areas outside of the course and other fields. It includes multiple interactions you're your peers, each one of which is meaningful and adds new thinking and material to the conversation</p>
# of posts	None or original thread only	Original thread only	Original thread & one response to fellow student	Original thread & at least two responses to fellow students