

Fall/Winter 2018-2019

AP/EN 3070 6.0A (Y)

Filming Literature

Course Director:

Natalie Neill
nneill@yorku.ca
Office: 321 Stong College
Office hours: Tues., 3:00-4:00

Delivery Format:

Lecture and Tutorials

Time:

Lecture: Tuesday, 4:30-6:30 / CLH M
Tutr 01 Tues., 6:30-7:30 (VH 1016) – Natalie Neill
Tutr 02 Tues., 7:30-8:30 (VH 1016) – Sidney Cunningham
Tutr 03 Tues. 6:30-7:30 (VH 1018) – Sidney Cunningham

Description:

Through the comparative study of specific literary and filmic texts, this course investigates the major issues in the interdisciplinary field of adaptation studies. We will study the formal differences between film and literature, paying attention to narration, point of view, and questions of reception. We will explore the relationship between literary and film genres and examine how filmmakers use cinematic means to approximate literary devices. We will also move beyond what Christopher Orr has called “fidelity criticism.” The fraught notion of fidelity not only privileges the literary original, it also delimits the practice and study of adaptation by ignoring film’s interpretive or discursive potential in favour of a preoccupation with questions of translation, equivalency, and mimesis. We will consider the many possible relationships that can exist between films and literature, including the way that filmmakers actively interpret and even interrogate their literary sources.

Over the course of the year we will discuss the following questions (among others): What are the similarities and differences between literature and film as narrative forms? What challenges face a filmmaker who uses a literary text as the basis for a film? How does the role of a film director compare with the role of a writer? How does film spectatorship differ from the private act of reading? How do historical context, culture, and ideology affect the way that literary texts are adapted to the screen?

Category:

A

Historical Requirement:

N/A

Requirements:

In-class essay 15% , Tues., Oct. 16 (to be held in tutorial groups)
Fall-term essay (5-6 pages) 25%, Fri., Dec. 7 (via the Turnitin link on Moodle)
Winter-term essay (6-7 pages) 30%, Fri., March 1 (via the Turnitin link on Moodle)
Year-end test 15%, Tues., April 2 (final lecture time slot)
Participation in tutorial groups 15%, To be determined by individual tutorial leaders

See page five of this outline for an overview of the assignments. Full assignment instructions will be circulated in class and posted in the “Assignments” folder on our course Moodle website.

Reading List:

L. Frank Baum, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (Oxford)
Raymond Chandler, *The Big Sleep* (Penguin Random House)
Anita Loos, *Gentleman Prefer Blondes* (Penguin)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (Oxford)
William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Penguin)
Stephen King, *The Shining* (Anchor / Penguin)
Amy Tan, *The Joy Luck Club* (Penguin)
Frank Miller, *300* (Dark Horse)
Solomon Northrup, *12 Years a Slave* (Penguin)

Additional short readings will be posted on the course Moodle site.

Students will also be responsible for the following films, which will be screened in class:

The Wizard of Oz (dir. Fleming, 1939)
The Big Sleep (dir. Hawks, 1946)
Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (dir. Hawks, 1953)
Frankenstein (dir. Whale, 1931)
It's a Wonderful Life (dir. Capra, 1946)
Throne of Blood (dir. Kurosawa, 1957)
The Shining (dir. Kubrick, 1980)
The Joy Luck Club (dir. Wang, 1993)
300 (dir. Snyder, 2007)
12 Years a Slave (dir. McQueen, 2013)

Open To:

Year 3, 4