

## Course Syllabus

---

### Course Information:

FILM 3342: FILM, VIOLENCE AND REAL LIFE.

Fall 2013

Mondays, 4-6:45pm

Location: ATC 2.602 \*note room change

### Professor Contact Information:

Dr. Shilyh Warren

[shilyh.warren@utdallas.edu](mailto:shilyh.warren@utdallas.edu)

Office: JO 5.112

Office phone: 972-883-6316

office hours: Monday or Wednesday by appointment

---

### Course Description:

Loathed and loved for his graphic depictions of violent acts, Quentin Tarantino recently berated journalists for obsessing about whether violent movies incite violent behavior. After the release of *Django Unchained* (2012), which coincided with some of the worst gun violence events in the US, Tarantino was asked yet again about why he feels there's no reasonable link between screen acts and real acts. He responded, "I'm not biting. I refuse your question... You can't make me dance to your tune. I'm not a monkey." While filmmakers and film critics insist that violent movies are not to blame for real violence, others are just as confident that banning violent movies and video games is the only way to end mass killings in real life. Why is there so much controversy about violence on screen? Why does violence appeal to movie spectators and filmmakers? Why do some fear the proliferation of violence in the media? How do movies get under our skin and into our bodies? In this class, we'll explore the history of violence on screen, theories about cinematic spectatorship and the effects of cinema, as well as consider popular debates about violence in the US and globally. Our films will explore a wide range of filmic approaches to many forms of violence, literal and imagined, poetic and graphic, human and otherwise.

Warning: Most of these films contain scenes of graphic and potentially disturbing violence, including: sex, murder, pain, torture, rape and general physical, social, and psychological mayhem. By signing up for this class, you agree to approach the material with generosity, respect, and intellectual decorum. This class is designed for students with an interest in film violence and a willingness to experience the many emotional, physical, and intellectual responses violent films elicit.

---

**Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students should demonstrate:

- a detailed knowledge of the texts we read and the films we watch;
- the ability to think critically about the texts; and
- an understanding of the history and impact of film violence.

Objects of the Arts and Performance major within with the Arts and Humanities undergraduate program:

1. Describe and apply methodology processes – Students will be able to describe and apply basic methodologies and processes by which aesthetic judgments are made
2. Demonstrate effective communication skills – Students will demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills
3. Demonstrate knowledge of principles and history – Students will demonstrate a broad knowledge of the principles and history of at least one major form of artistic expression
4. To gain experience and expertise – Students will gain experience and expertise in at least one areas of the creative and performing arts

---

**Required Textbooks and Materials:**

1. James Kendrick. *Film Violence: History, Ideology, Genre*. London: Wallflower Press, 2009.
2. Stephen Prince, ed. *Screening Violence*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000.

All other readings will be available on e-reserves with our password. *Members of the class are required to print out all reading assignments and/or bring hardcopies to each class.*

This class uses email and google drive. Please familiarize yourself with google drive and make sure to check your UTD email account regularly.

---

**Assignments and Grading Policy:**

- 15% - Participation
  - Attendance (after 2 absences, your grade will be negatively impacted)
  - Performance (engagement, participation in class, preparedness)
- 15% - 1 Audio-visual presentation on the assigned HW film
  - including: introduce film, present clip, facilitate discussion
- 25% - 1 Midterm Film Analysis Paper (1250-1500 words)
  - on a film not watched for class
  - Due by midnight Friday, October 11.
- 20% - 4 response papers (200-300 words)
  - due before class
  - submit only 1 per class session
  - pass/fail
- 25% - Final Paper or Creative Project
  - must be approved in advance
  - Due before class Monday, December 9

Updated: September 12, 2013

### Grading Scale:

A+ = 100+	B+ = 86-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	F = Below 60
A = 95-99	B = 83-85	C = 73-76	D = 63-66	
A- = 90-94	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-72	D- = 60-62	

### Course Calendar

#### Class 1. Monday, August 26. Introduction.

Monday, September 2. No Class. Labor Day.

#### Class 2. Monday, September 9. Media Myths and Models.

HW Screening: *Django Unchained* (Quentin Tarantino, 2012. 165 min.) [Netflix DVD; Amazon Instant; Google Play]

1. Zillmann, Dolf. "The Psychology of the Appeal of Portrayals of Violence." *Why We Watch: The Attractions of Violent Entertainment*, 179-211. Ed. Jeffrey Goldstein. New York: Oxford UP, 1998.
2. Leonard Berkowitz, "Some Effects of Thoughts on Anti- and Prosocial Influences of Media Events: A Cognitive Neoassociation Analysis." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 205-236.
3. Richard B. Felson, "Mass Media Effects on Violent Behavior." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 237-266.

Also: Browse around online to find out about the reaction to Tarantino & *Django* in light of the Newtown School Shooting. Read Tarantino's claims about cinema and violence. See, for example:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/25/opinion/sunday/does-media-violence-lead-to-the-real-thing.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/25/opinion/sunday/does-media-violence-lead-to-the-real-thing.html?_r=0)

<http://www.theatlanticwire.com/entertainment/2013/01/quentin-tarantino-violence-quotes/60900/>

<http://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2013/02/quentin-tarantino-deaths-movies>

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2013/01/20/violence-video-games-gun-control/1849889/>

### *Part I. History*

#### Class 3. Monday, September 16. Defining Violence.

HW Screening: *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960) [Netflix DVD; Google Play; Amazon Instant]

In class selections from: *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, 1944), *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958), *Peeping Tom* (Michael Powell, 1960).

Updated: September 12, 2013

1. Slocum, J. David. "Violence and American Cinema: Notes for an Investigation." In *Violence and American Cinema*. Edited by David J. Slocum, 1–36. New York: Routledge, 2001.
2. James Kendrick, "Introduction" (1-5), Ch 1 "What do we mean by 'Film Violence'" (6-31) & Ch 2 "A History of Film Violence" (32-68) in *Film Violence: History, Ideology, Genre*.

**Class 4. Monday, September 23. Hollywood finds a Trend.**

HW Screening: *Bonnie & Clyde* (Arther Penn, 1967) [Netflix DVD; Google Play; Amazon Instant]

In class: selections from *Rashomon* (Akira Kurosawa, 1950), *Faster Pussy Cat Kill! Kill!* (Russ Meyer, 1955), *The Wild Bunch* (Sam Peckinpah, 1969)

1. Prince, Stephen. "Graphic Violence in the Cinema: Origins, Aesthetic Design, and Social Effects." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 1–46.
2. Joseph Morgenstern, "The Thin Red Line." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 47-50.
3. Bosley Crowther, "Movies to Kill People By" and "Another Smash at Violence." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 51-56.
4. Ronald Gold, "Crowther's 'Bonnie' – Brook: Rap at Violence Stirs Brouhaha." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 57-61.
5. "Statement by Jack Valenti, MPAA President, before The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 62-75.

**Class 5. Monday, September 30. The 1970s.**

HW Screening: *A Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick, 1971) [Netflix DVD; Google Play; Amazon Instant]

In class: selections from *The Godfather* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1972), *Apocalypse Now* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1979), *Taxi Driver* (Martin Scorsese, 1976).

1. Stephen Prince. "The Aesthetic of Slow Motion Violence in the Films of Sam Peckinpah." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 175-201.
2. Sobchack, Vivian. "The Violent Dance: A Personal Memoir of Death in the Movies." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 110-124.
3. Letters to the Editor of *The New York Times* about *Clockwork Orange* from Hechinger, Kubrick, and McDowell. <http://www.krusch.com/kubrick/Q47.html>

**Part II. Ideology & Genre**

**Class 6. Monday, October 7. Gender, Class & Horror.**

HW Screening: *American Psycho* (Mary Haron, 2000) [Netflix DVD; Amazon DVD \$6.97]

In class: *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (Tobe Hooper, 1974)

1. Carol Clover. Clover, "Her Body, Himself: Gender in the Slasher Film." In *Screening Violence*. Edited by Stephen Prince, 125-175. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000.

Updated: September 12, 2013

2. Linda Williams, "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess." *Film Quarterly* 44.4 (Summer, 1991): 2-13.

**\*\*MIDTERM PAPER DUE BY MIDNIGHT, FRIDAY OCTOBER 11\*\***

**Class 7. Monday, October 14. Rape.**

HW Screening: *Irreversible* (Gaspar Noé, 2009) [Netflix Instant; Amazon Instant Video]

In class: *Rape* (JoAnn Elam, 1971) at <http://ow.ly/nMSz2>

1. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." In *Visual and Other Pleasures*. 14-27. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
2. Sarah Projansky, "The Elusive/Ubiquitous Representation of Rape: A Historical Survey of Rape in U.S. Film, 1903-1972." *Cinema Journal* Vol. 41 No. 1 (Autumn, 2001): 63-90.
3. Julia Lesage, "Disarming Film Rape." *Jump Cut* 19 (1978): 14-16. Available online at: <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC19folder/RapeElam.html>

**Class 8. Monday, October 21. Rape-Revenge.**

HW Screening: *Hard Candy* (David Slade, 2005) [Netflix Instant; Google Play; Amazon Instant]

In-class selections from: *Foxy Brown* (Jack Hill, 1974), *Thelma and Louise* (Ridley Scott, 1991), *Kill Bill* (Tarantino, 2003), *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (Niels Arden Oplev, 2009 and David Fincher, 2011).

1. Barbara Creed, "The *Femme Castratrice: I Spit on Your Grave, Sisters.*" *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis*. (London: Routledge, 1993) 122-138.
2. Jacinda Reed, Ch 1 "Narratives of Transformation: The Rape-Revenge Cycle." In *The New Avengers: Feminism, Femininity and the Rape-Revenge Cycle* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000): 22-57.
3. Alexandra Heller-Nicholas, Chapter 1 "The Rape Revenge Film Canon" (21-59) in *Rape-Revenge Films: A Critical Study* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011).

**Class 9. Monday, October 28. Violence & Revolution/Terrorism.**

HW Screening: *The Battle of Algiers* (Gilles Pontecorvo, 1966) [Netflix DVD; Amazon Instant; huluplus]

In-class: Selections from *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925) and *Clandestine Childhood* (Benjamin Ávila, 2012)

1. Nicholas Harrison, "Pontecorvo's 'Documentary' Aesthetics." *Interventions* 9.3 (2007): 389-404.
2. Edward Said and Gillo Pontecorvo, "The Dictatorship of Truth: An Interview with Gillo Pontecorvo." *Cinéaste* 25. 2 (2000): 24-25.
3. Michael T. Kaufman, "The World: Film Studies; What Does the Pentagon See in 'Battle of Algiers'?" *New York Times*, September 7, 2003.
4. Helen Grace, "Battleship Potemkin." *Senses of Cinema* 25.2 (March 2000). <http://sensesofcinema.com/2000/cteq/potemkin/>

**Class 10. Monday, November 4. Violence & History**

HW Screening: *Caché* (Michael Haneke, 2005) [Netflix DVD; Amazon Instant Purchase \$9.99]

1. Ipek A. Celik, "I Wanted You to Be Present": Guilt and the History of Violence in Michael Haneke's *Caché*." *Cinema Journal*, 50, Number 1, Fall 2010: 65 – 77.
2. Ricardo Domizio, "Digital Cinema and the 'Schizophrenic' Image: The Case of Michael Haneke's *Hidden*." *The Cinema of Michael Haneke*. Eds. Ben McCann and David Sorfa. 237-255. London: Wallflower Press, 2011.

**Class 11. Monday, November 11. Documenting Violence**

HW Screening: *Señorita extraviada* (Lourdes Portillo, 2001) [Only available on reserve at McDermott. Plan ahead!]

In-class: *Blood of the Beasts* (Georges Franju, 1949), *Night & Fog* (Alain Resnais, 1955), *Battle of Chile* (Patricio Guzman, 1975-1979)

1. Vivian Sobchack. "Inscribing Ethical Space: Ten Propositions on Death, Representation, and Documentary." In *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*. 226-257. Berkeley: U of California P, 2004.
2. Michele, Zoey Élouard. "Missing: On the Politics of Re/Presentation." In *Killing Women: The Visual Culture of Gender and Violence*. Eds. Annette Burfoot and Susan Lord, 47-65. Waterloo, ON, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006.

**Class 12. Monday, November 18. A Critique of Violence.**

In class: *C'est arrivé près de chez vous [Man Bites Dog]* (Rémy Belvaux, 1992, 95m)

1. André Bazin, "Death Every Afternoon." *Rites of Realism*. Ed. Ivone Margulies, 27-31. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2003.
2. Christian Metz, "On the Impression of Reality in the Cinema." *Film Language*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1974. 3-15.
3. Walter Benjamin, "A Critique of Violence" [1921]. 277-300. *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writing*. (New York: Schocken Books, 1986)

Monday, November 25. No Class.

**Class 13. Monday, December 2. The Global Art Film & Violence.**

HW: *Cidade de deus [City of God]* (Fernando Meirelles, 2003) [Netflix DVD; Amazon Instant; Google Play]

1. Jaime Do Amparo Alves, "Narratives of Violence: The White ImagiNation and the Making of Black Masculinity in *City of God*." *Sociedade e cultura* 12.2 (December 2009): 301-309.
2. McClennen, Sophia. "From the Aesthetics of Hunger to the Cosmetics of Hunger in Brazilian Cinema: Meirelles' *City of God*." *sympoke* 19.1-2 (2011): 95-106.

**Class 14. Monday, December 9.**

Screening (TBD) and Final Discussion

Updated: September 12, 2013

## UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

*The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor. Please make sure you have the most updated version of this syllabus.*