

HUAS 7360: Affect and the Audiovisual

Spring 2015

Thursdays 1:00pm-3:45pm

[JO 4.112](#)

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Course Description:

The history of the humanities evidences a number of significant so-called "turns," including the linguistic turn, the cultural turn, and more recently, the affective turn. By (re)turning to questions of the body, emotions, feelings, and sensation, scholars have opened up new avenues for thinking about aesthetics, politics, and being. In this seminar we pursue the intellectual lineage of the affective turn through Deleuze, Merleau-Ponty, Susan Sontag, Vivian Sobchack, Brian Massumi, Laura Marks, and others. What do we gain when we place new emphasis on the sensing body rather than the thinking mind? What do we lose? In what ways have contemporary works of art, including film and video, photography, sculpture and music, stressed a sensory experience above and beyond or with and alongside a cognitive understanding through language? In this seminar we cultivate curiosity about how we feel, what and how we know, and how works of art engage all of our senses. All are welcome, especially those with an interest in connecting philosophical thinking to aesthetic production and experience.

Assignments & Grading Rubric:

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|------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Participation: | 15 points |
| • 1 Exhibition Review: | 15 points – Due Feb 12. |
| • 1 Book Review: | 30 points – Due March 26. |
| • 1 Conference Paper: | 40 points – Due April 30. |

Detailed guidelines for these assignments will be distributed separately.

Required Books:

Stewart, Kathleen, *Ordinary Affects*. Durham: Duke UP, 2007.

Shaviro, Steven. *The Cinematic Body*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1993.

Marks, Laura. *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*. Durham: Duke UP, 2000.

All other readings will be available on e-reserves with our password. The URL for this page is:

<http://utdallas.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1846>

Course Outline

Jan 15. Class 1. Introduction to the Class

In-class: *Her* (Spike Jonze, 2013)

Sontag, Susan. "[Against Interpretation](#)." In *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1961

Peruse the entry on "[On 'Affect' and 'Emotion' in Film and Media Studies](#)" at *Film Studies for Free*.

Jan 22. Class 2. Introduction to Affect

Watch: *Under the Skin* (Jonathan Glazer, 2013)

Siegworth, Gregory and Melissa Gregg. "An Inventory of Shimmers." In *The Affect Theory Reader*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010. 1-28.

Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary Affects*. Durham: Duke UP, 2007.

Watch: "Visceral Theory: Affect and Embodiment" at http://youtu.be/kP_AfO7Ms4I

Jan 29. Class 3. Genealogies of Affect for Film Studies 1

Watch: *Mulholland Drive* (David Lynch, 2001)

Deleuze, Gilles. "From *Cinema II: The Time Image*." In *Critical Visions in Film Theory*. Boston; New York: Bedford St. Martin's, 2011. 185-202.

Rodowick, D.N. "Preface" and Chapter 1: "A Short History of Cinema." In *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*. Duke UP, 1997. ix-17.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. "Percept, Affect, and Concept." In *What is Philosophy?* London: Verso, 1994. 163-200.

Feb 5. Class 3. Genealogies of Affect for Film Studies 2

Watch: *The Piano* (Jane Campion, 1993)

Barthes, Roland. "The Third Meaning: Research Notes on Some Eisenstein Stills." In *Film Theory: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies, Volume 1*. Edited by Philip Simpson, Andrew Utterson, Karen J. Shepherdson. London: Routledge, 2004. 197-218.

Merleau Ponty, Maurice. *Sense and Non-Sense*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1964. "Translator's Introduction" (ix – xxvii) and "The Film and New Psychology" (48-62).

Sobchack, Vivian. "What My Fingers Knew: The Cinesthetic Subject, or Vision in the Flesh." In *Carnal Thoughts*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004. 53-84.

**Feb 12. No Class. ** Exhibit/Exhibition Review Due on e-learning.

Feb 19. Class 4. Feminism, Affect, and Documentary.

Watch: *Divorce Iranian Style* (Kim Longinotto and Ziba Mir-Hosseini, 1998)

Smaill, Belinda. "Women, Pain, and the Documentaries of Kim Longinotto." In *The Documentary: Politics, Emotion, Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Hemmings, Clare. "Invoking Affect: Cultural Theory and the Ontological Turn." *Cultural Studies* 19. 5 (September 2005): 548-567.

Feb. 26. Class 5. Trajectories of Affect for Film Studies

Watch: *Blue Steel* (Kathryn Bigelow, 1989) and *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982)

Shaviri, Steven. "Film Theory and Visual Fascination." In *The Cinematic Body*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1993. 1-65.

Shaviri, Steven. "The Cinematic Body Redux." <http://www.shaviri.com/Othertexts/Cinematic.pdf>

March 5. Class 6. Touching Seeing

Watch: *Syndromes and a Century* (Apichatpong Weerasethakul, 2006)

In-class: *History and Memory* (Rea Tajiri, 1991)

Massumi, Brian. "The Autonomy of Affect." In *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*.

Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002. 23-45.

Marks, Laura. Introduction & Chapter 3: "The Memory of Touch." In *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses*. Durham: Duke UP, 2000. 1-23,

March 12. Class 7. Of Minds. Cognitive Theory and Affect.

Watch: *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (Julian Schnabel, 2007)

Bordwell, David. "Minding Movies." <http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/2008/03/05/minding-movies/>

Plantinga, Carl. "The Sensual Medium." In *Moving Viewers: American Film And The Spectator's Experience*. Berkeley: U of California Press, 2009. 112-139.

March 19. Of the Environment.

Watch: *Darwin's Nightmare* (Hubert Sauper, 2004) and *The Cove* (Louie Psihoyos, 2009)

Smaill, Belinda. "Darwin's Nightmare and The Cove: Emotion and Political Documentary." *Moving Environments: Affect, Emotion, Ecology and Film*. Alexa Weik von Mossner (Ed.). Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2014.

March 26. No class. Book Review Due on e-learning.

April 2. Class 9. Of Things.

Watch: *The Gleaners and I* (Agnes Varda, 2000)

Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010. 1-38, 52-61.

Kendall, Tina. "Cinematic Affect and the Ethics of Waste" *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* 10. 1 (March 2012): 45-61.

April 9. Class 10. Photography & Empathy

Browse: Rineke Dijkstra's photographs online.

Watch: "Guggenheim Symposium - Empathy, Affect, and the Photographic Image" at <http://youtu.be/tFeBRCK3xns>

In class: *Rineke Dijkstra: A Retrospective* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 2012)

April 16. Class 11. Sound.

Watch: *La mujer sin cabeza* (Lucretia Martel, 2008)

Wachtel, Edward. (2005). "How To Hear a Film". In Lance Strate (Ed.), *Exploration in Media Ecology, The Journal of the Media Ecology Association*. Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton Press. 49-62.

Sobchack, Vivian. "When the Ear Drums: Dolby Digital and the Imagination of Sound. *Film Quarterly* 58. 4 (Summer 2005). 2-15.

April 23. Class 12. Completing the Turn

Watch: *Ida* (Pawel Pawlikowski, 2014)

Brinkema, Eugenie. Preface: "Ten Points to Begin" & Chapter 2: "Film Theory's Absent Center, *The Forms of the Affects*." Durham: Duke UP, 2014. xi-xxx; 26-47.

April 30. Final Presentations. ** Conference Paper Due on e-learning.