Lecture Outlines

This file assembles the outlines of each lecture session given during the Fall 2013 class.

NOTE: The 21L.011 Fall 2013 OCW site combines lecture materials from 2006, 2007, and 2013. These outlines from 2013 reflect the continued refinement of course structure and content, and there will be occasional inconsistencies with the detailed notes from 2006 and eight lecture videos originally recorded in 2007.

Lecture 1. Introduction

1. What is Film?
   - Chemistry
   - Novelty
   - Manufactured object
   - Social formation

2. Think Away I-Pods
   - The novelty of movement
   - Early films and early audiences

3. The Fred Ott Principle

4. Three Phases of Media Evolution
   - Imitation
   - Technical Advance
   - Maturity

5. “And There Was Charlie”

Reference: James Agee, A Death in the Family (1957)

Lecture 2. Keaton

1. The Fred Ott Principle, continued
   - The myth of technological determinism
   - A Paradox: Capitalism and the Movies

2. The Great Train Robbery (1903)

3. The Lonedale Operator (1911)
   - Reference: Tom Gunning, "Systematizing the Electronic Message: Narrative Form, Gender and Modernity in 'The Lonedale Operator'". In American
4. Buster Keaton (1895-1966)
   • Acrobat/Actor
   • Technician/Director
   • Metaphysician/Artist

5. The multiplicity principle:
   • Entertainment vs. Art

6. The General (1927)
   • “A culminating text”
   • Structure
   • The Keaton hero: steadfast, muddling
   • The Keaton universe: contingency

**Lecture 3. Chaplin, part 1**

1. Movies Before Chaplin

2. Enter Chaplin

3. Chaplin’s Career
   • The Multiplicity Principle, continued

4. The Tramp as Myth

5. Chaplin’s World
   • Elemental themes

**Lecture 4. Chaplin, part 2**

1. Keaton vs. Chaplin

2. Three Passages
   • *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*
   • *The Gold Rush*
   • *City Lights*

3. Modern Times (1936)
   • Context
   • A Culminating Film
   • The Gamin
   • Sound
   • Structure
   • Chaplin’s complexity
Lecture 5. Film as a global and cultural form; montage & mise en scene

1. Film as a Cultural Form
   - Global vs. National Cinema
   - American vs. European Cinema
   - High culture vs. Hollywood

2. Montage vs. Mise en Scene

3. Eisenstein and Potemkin (1925)
   - Film as instruction, propaganda, moral fable

Lecture 6. German film, Murnau

1. German Film and Expressionism
   - The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (Robert Weine, 1919)
   - Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1926)

2. F.W. Murnau (1889-1931)
   - Nosferatu (1922)
   - Sunrise (1927)
   - Tabu (w/ Robert Flaherty, 1931)

3. The Last Laugh (1924)
   - The unchained camera
   - Themes: working class tragedy
   - Character: work and personal identity
   - The ending: true or false

Lecture 7. The Studio Era

1. An Industry Emerges
   - The golden age of Hollywood
   - Stars and genres
   - "An aesthetics of connection"

2. Strains of Comedy
   - Anarchic
   - Worldly
   - Screwball

3. Screwball heroine: Barbara Stanwyck
   - The Lady Eve (1941)
   - Ball of Fire (1942)
Lecture 8. The Work of Movies, Capra & Hawks

1. The Cultural Work of Movies
   - Entertainment
   - Genre and license
   - Consensus narrative: traditional, dominant and emergent voices

2. Frank Capra (1897-1991) & Howard Hawks (1896-1977)

3. *It Happened One Night* (1934)
   - Production notes
   - Context: the Depression
   - The American male
   - Romance across social class
   - “A marriage of true minds”
   - The ending

4. *His Girl Friday* (1940)
   - Theater into film
   - Counter-plot: against genre
   - Hawks’ central scene: quarrelling intimacy
   - Hawks’ complexity: laughter and cynicism

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Howard Hawks (1896—1977)
Screwball comedy:
   - *Twentieth Century*, 1934
   - *Bringing Up Baby*, 1938
   - *His Girl Friday*, 1940
   - *Ball of Fire*, 1941
Westerns:
   - *Red River*, 1948
   - *Rio Bravo*, 1959
   - *El Dorado*, 1966
   - *Rio Lobo*, 1970
Other genres:
   - *The Dawn Patrol*, 1930
   - *Scarface*, 1932
   - *Sergeant York*, 1941
   - *Air Force*, 1943
   - *To Have and Have Not*, 1944

Frank Capra (1987—1991)
   - *It Happened One Night*, 1934
   - *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, 1936
   - *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, 1939
   - *Meet John Doe*, 1941
   - *It's a Wonderful Life*, 1946
   - *State of the Union*, 1948
Lecture 9. Hitchcock

Alfred Hitchcock (1899-1980)

1. Hitchcock and "the genius of the system"

2. An anecdote

3. Hitchcock’s career

4. Hitchcock the technician

5. Themes

6. The Double Man

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Hitchcock films: a selection

The Pleasure Gardens, 1925
The Lodger, 1927

Blackmail, 1929
Murder!, 1930
The Man Who Knew Too Much, 1934
The 39 Steps, 1935
The Lady Vanishes, 1938

Rebecca, 1940
Suspicion, 1941
Shadow of a Doubt, 1943
Lifeboat, 1944
Rope, 1948
Strangers on a Train, 1951
Rear Window, 1954
Vertigo, 1958
North by Northwest, 1959
Psycho, 1960
The Birds, 1963
Marnie, 1964
Frenzy, 1972
Family Plot, 1976
Lecture 10. *Shadow of a Doubt* and *Rear Window*

1. *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943)
   - Context: WWII, H. in exile
   - Against Capra
   - The opening: behind any door or window . . .
   - An American town, an American family
   - Two Charlies: rhyming shots
   - Subplot: murder as diversion
   - The ending: ambiguity

   - The opening scene: confinement, voyeurism
   - An essay on seeing
   - An elegant structure: the subplots
   - Class and gender
   - The ending: more ambiguity

Lecture 11. The Musical Film

1. An American Form

2. Numbers
   - 1927-47: 919 films (48 films each year)
   - 1949-58: 23 films per year
   - 1959-80: 7 films per year

3. Themes
   - Show business: community: the show goes on
   - High culture, popular culture
   - Class or position vs. talent, merit
   - Convention, restraint vs. spontaneity, energy, “the natural”

4. History
   - Revue, Operetta: *Love Me Tonight* (Rouben Mamoulian, 1932)
   - Busby Berkeley & Warner Brothers: *42nd Street* (1933)
   - Astaire, Rogers and RKO: *Top Hat* (1935)
   - MGM and “the integrated musical”: *Singin’ in the Rain* (Donen and Kelly, 1952), Arthur Freed (1894-1973): The Freed Unit
Lecture 12. The Musical Film (continued)

1. Astaire vs. Kelly

2. *Singin’ in the Rain*
   - Self-consciousness: an encyclopedia of musical history
   - Themes: high art vs. popular art, outer vs. inner: appearance vs. reality
   - The place of song and dance

3. *Cabaret* (Bob Fosse, 1972)
   - Beyond genre: the end of Hollywood
   - Fosse’s career: the inheritor
   - Weimar Germany and America in the late 1960s
   - Style: mise en scene and montage
   - Texture: multiplicity
   - Musical numbers: true integration
   - Themes: innocence, history, the limits of satire

Lecture 13. The Western, part 1

1. Movies as Consensus Narrative
   - Genre as a forum, a discourse space, the “theater of a nation”

2. Historical/Cultural Background
   - The “real” west: 1860-1890
   - Popular culture before film
   - Intellectual culture: The Turner Thesis

3. The Western as Cultural Myth
   - Founding story
   - Dichotomies
   - The divided hero: savior and savage

Lecture 14. The Western, part 2

1. The Western Film
   - A quick history

2. John Ford (1895-1973)

   1) Damaged hero
   2) Setting: Monument Valley
3) Plot: founding story, captive’s tale
4) Structure: seven ‘threshold shots’
5) A turning point
6) The title and the ending: ambiguity

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THE WESTERN MOVIE

1. Silent Film
1903 The Great Train Robbery
1913 The Battle of Elderbush Gulch (D. W. Griffith)
1914 The Virginian (Cecil B. DeMille)
1917 Straight Shooting (John Ford)
1923 The Covered Wagon (James Cruze)
1924 The Iron Horse (Ford)
1925 Go West (Keaton)

2. Early Sound
1929 In Old Arizona (Raoul Walsh) [first sound western]

1930s Singing Cowboys, B-westerns
    Gene Autry, Roy Rogers
    Saturday matinees: Lash LaRue

3. The Classical Age of the Western Film
1939 Stagecoach (John Ford; s: John Wayne)
1940 The Westerner (Wm Wyler)
1941 Billy The Kid (David Miller; s: Robert Taylor)
1944 Buffalo Bill (Wm Wellman; s: Joel McCrea)
1946 My Darling Clementine (Ford; s: Henry Fonda)
1948 Fort Apache (Ford; s: Wayne and Fonda)
1948 Red River (Howard Hawks; s: Wayne, Montgomery Clift)
1948 Treasure of the Sierra Madre (John Huston; s: Humphrey Bogart)

4. The 'Adult' Western
1950 The Gunfighter (Henry King; s: Gregory Peck)
1952 High Noon (Fred Zinnemann; s: Gary Cooper)
1953 Shane (George Stevens; s: Alan Ladd)
1956 The Searchers (Ford; s: Wayne)
1957 3:10 to Yuma (Delmer Daves)
1958 The Left-Handed Gun (Arthur Penn; s: Paul Newman)
1960 Magnificent Seven (John Sturges)
1961 One-Eyed Jacks (Marlon Brando; s: Brando and Karl Malden)
1962 Lonely Are the Brave (David Miller; s: Kirk Douglas)
1967 Hombre (Martin Ritt; s: Newman)
1969 Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (George Roy Hill; s: Newman and Robt Redford)
1969 The Wild Bunch (Sam Peckinpah; s: William Holden)
1969  *Once Upon a Time in the West* (Sergio Leone; s: Fonda and Charles Bronson)

5. The Anti-Western
1970 *Soldier Blue* (Ralph Nelson)
1971 *Little Big Man* (Arthur Penn; s: Dustin Hoffman)
1971 *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* (Robert Altman)
1976 *Buffalo Bill and the Indians* (Altman)

6. Vestiges, Reincarnations
1985 *Silverado* (Lawrence Kasdan)
1990s:
  *Unforgiven* (Clint Eastwood)
  *Dances with Wolves* (d. and s: Kevin Costner)
  *Tombstone* (s: Kurt Russell)
  *Wyatt Earp* (Kasdan; s: Costner)
2007:
  *3:10 to Yuma* (James Mangold)
  *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* (Andrew Dominik)

TV:
  1989: *Lonesome Dove* (from the Larry McMurtry novel)
  2004-06: *Deadwood* (David Milch)

John Ford (1895-1973)
1924 *The Iron Horse*
1928 *Napoleon’s Barber* (first Ford talkie)
1935 *The Informer* (4 Oscars)
1939 *Stagecoach*
1939 *Young Mr. Lincoln*
1939 *Drums Along the Mohawk*
1940 *The Grapes of Wrath*
1946 *My Darling Clementine*
1948 *Fort Apache*
1949 *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*
1950 *Rio Grande*
1950 *Wagonmaster*
1956 *The Searchers*
1962 *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*
1964 *Cheyenne Autumn*
1965 *Seven Women*
Lecture 15. American Film in the 1970s

1. Transformations and subversion
   • Directors
   • Actors
   • Style/Endings
   • Dissenting Genres

2. Social History
   • Vietnam war
   • Assassinations
   • JFK, LBJ, Nixon
   • Watergate

3. Film and Television: A New Consensus Medium
   • Two versions of MASH

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Key Figures of the 1970s

Actors
Warren Beatty
Jack Nicholson
Elliott Gould
Dustin Hoffman
Robert DeNiro
Julie Christie
Jane Fonda
Faye Dunaway

Directors
Robert Altman
Francis F. Coppola, Godfather (1972), Godfather II (1974)
Bob Fosse
Stanley Kubrick, Clockwork Orange (1971)
Roman Polansky, Chinatown (1973)
Martin Scorsese, Mean Streets (1973), Taxi Driver (1976)
Lecture 16. American Film in the 1970s, Part II

1. Robert Altman (1925-2006)
   - Career
   - Defining qualities:
     o Moral skepticism
     o Sympathy for the marginal
     o Plot vs. character
     o Fiction vs. “reality”

2. *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* (1971)
   - “Ruin the Sacred Truths”
   - Sound and image: a new realism?
   - Hero/savior-clown or fool
   - Love story: gal from the East
   - Founding myth: Presbyterian Church
   - The ending: slapstick murder as the town is born

Lecture 17. Renoir and Poetic Realism

1. French film
   - A parallel history

2. Jean Renoir (1894-1979)

3. Poetic Realism
   - Forerunner: Jean Vigo (1905-34)
     - *A Propos de Nice* (1930)
     - *Zero for Conduct* (1933)
     - *L’Atalante* (1934)
   - Key features
   - Andre Bazin (1918-58) on Renoir

4. Two examples
   - Dinner in prison: *Grand Illusion*
   - The ending of *Boudu*

5. Visual style as moral vision

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Jean Renoir (1894-1979)

- 1926 *Nana* (Zola novel)
- 1928 *The Little Match Girl*
- 1931 *La Chienne*
- 1932 *Boudu Saved from Drowning*
• 1934 Madame Bovary (Flaubert novel)
• 1935 Toni
• 1937 Grand Illusion
• 1939 Rules of the Game

• 1941 Swamp Water
• 1945 The Southerner
• 1945 The Diary of a Chambermaid

• 1950 The River

Lecture 18. Renoir’s Grand Illusion

1. Camera
   • Invisible witness: respectful, attentive, restless

2. Actors
   • Von Strohein: The man you love to hate
   • Gabin: Mad proletarian

3. Themes
   • Prison camp as microcosm
   • Barriers, boundaries
   • Historical transition

4. Renoir’s Maturity
   • Character
   • Plot: a war story without battles
   • The title: how many grand illusions?

Lecture 19. Italian Neorealism

1. The Opening of Bicycle Thieves
   • The multiplicity principle

2. Historical Context
   • WW II
   • Italian film under Fascism
   • Hollywood film

3. Origins
   • Italian, German, French

4. Key Features
   • Non-professional actors, outdoor camera, mise en scène, documentary flavor, character vs plot

5. Central Figures
• Cesaré Zavattini (1902-77)
• Luchino Visconti (1906-76)
  - *Obsession* (1942) *The Earth Trembles* (1948)
• Roberto Rosselini (1906-77)
  - *Open City* (1945)
• Vittorio De Sica (1902-74)

6. The Neorealist Counter-plot
   • The beginning of *Open City*

**Lecture 20. Italian Neorealism, Part II: DeSica and *Bicycle Thieves***

1. Vittorio De Sica (1902-74)
   - 1942 *The Children Are Watching Us*
   - 1946 *Shoeshine*
   - 1948 *Bicycle Thieves*
   - 1950 *Miracle in Milan*
   - 1952 *Umberto D*
   - 1960 *Two Women*
   - 1971 *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*

2. *Bicycle Thieves*
   - Structure: organic form
   - Social themes
   - Character: father and son
   - The title


1. Neo-realisms: Two clips
   - *Umberto-D* (1952)
   - *The 400 Blows*

2. Origins of the *Nouvelle Vague*
   - Vigo, Renoir and Neorealism
   - American studio directors
   - Alexandre Astruc (1923- ); *caméra-stylo*
   - Bazin (1918-58) and *Cahiers du Cinéma*
   - Auteur theory

3. Key films of 1959-60
   - *Hiroshima, mon amour* (Alain Resnais)
   - *Breathless* (Jean-Luc Godard)
   - *The 400 Blows* (Francois Truffaut)

4. *La Nouvelle Vague*: style and tone
   - mise en scène
   - location sight and sound
• improvisation: plot and dialogue
• jump cuts and elliptical editing
• self-reflexiveness: films about film

5. Francois Truffaut (1932-1984)
   1959 The 400 Blows*
   1960 Shoot the Piano Player
   1962 Jules and Jim
   1962 “Antoine and Colette”*
   1966 Fahrenheit 451
   1968 Stolen Kisses*
   1970 The Wild Child
   1970 Bed and Board*
   1973 Day for Night (La Nuit américaine)
   1977 The Man Who Loved Women
   1979 Love on the Run*
   1980 The Last Metro
   [* = films about the Antoine Doinel character]

6. The 400 Blows
   • The title
   • Setting: a Parisian odyssey
   • The family romance
   • Structure: a “natural” unfolding
   • The ending: ambiguity: no catastrophe, no apocalypse

Lecture 22. Kurosawa and Rashomon

Akira Kurosawa (1910-1998) and Rashomon

1. The “moment” of Rashomon
   • Film as an international medium
   • Modernist cinema
   • Ingmar Bergman (1918-2007)
   • Satyajit Ray (1921-92)
   • Federico Fellini (1921-93)

2. Japanese Cinema: a note
   • Theatrical traditions
   • Kenji Mizoguchi (1898-1956)
   • Yasujiro Ozu (1903-63)

3. Kurosawa’s career
   • The Kurosawa-gumi
     1950 Rashomon
     1952 Ikiru
     1954 Seven Samurai
     1957 Throne of Blood
     1961 Yojimbo
1980  *Kagamusha*

4. *Rashomon*
   - The title and the historical setting
   - The "medium:" a miko
   - Visual style: dynamic, eclectic: “a real surrealism”
   - The drama of the telling
   - The ending: should we delete it?

**Lecture 23. Summary Perspectives: Film as Art and Artifact**

1. Film as a cultural form
   - Stories and culture
   - Culture as a process, always unfinished
   - “Golden Lads:” consensus narrative
     - conservative, collaborative, accessible

2. Film as art
   - Art as a form of intelligence and competence
   - Texture, multiplicity
   - An example: *Seven Samurai* --To the village

3. Thanks to all of you