



Topic
Better Living

Subtopic
Hobby & Leisure

How to View and Appreciate Great Movies

Course Guidebook

Professor Eric Williams
Ohio University



PUBLISHED BY:

THE GREAT COURSES

Corporate Headquarters

4840 Westfields Boulevard, Suite 500

Chantilly, Virginia 20151-2299

Phone: 1-800-832-2412

Fax: 703-378-3819

www.thegreatcourses.com

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ERIC WILLIAMS, MFA

Professor of Media Arts & Studies
Ohio University

Eric Williams is a Professor in the School of Media Arts & Studies at Ohio University, where he teaches courses on screenwriting, film, and virtual reality production. He is also the director of the MFA in Communication Media Arts program at Ohio University. Professor Williams received his bachelor's degree in Communication with a minor in Education from Northwestern University, and he earned his master of fine arts degree in Film from Columbia University.

Before directing his first feature film, *Snakes and Arrows*, Professor Williams worked as a cinematographer and assistant director in New York City. He has written more than 30 screenplays, including adaptations of Bill Littlefield's sports novel *Prospect* and Luis Urrea's collection of short stories *Across the Wire: Life and Hard Times on the Mexican Border*. He has also written, produced, and directed for companies such as Workshop Productions, Liam Films, American Movie Classics, Fox Interactive, and Universal Studios.

Professor Williams's films and screenplays have won the Best New Work award from the Writers Guild of America and the Individual Excellence Award in screenwriting from the Ohio Arts Council. His film *Breaking News* was selected as one of the "Top Five Films Not to Miss" by the Athens Independent Film Society at the Athens International Film and Video Festival. Professor Williams's scripts have also been invited for workshop at the Film Independent Producing Lab in Los Angeles. At Ohio University, he has received the University Professor Award for excellence in teaching, and he was also a finalist for the Presidential Teacher Award.

Professor Williams coedited the book *Media and the Creative Process*, which explores topics such as sound design, filmmaking, and interactive storytelling. He is also the author of two other books: *Screen Adaptation: Beyond the Basics* and *The Screenwriters Taxonomy*.

When he is not writing, producing, or directing, Professor Williams enjoys working on international media education projects; he frequently travels to South America and Eastern Europe. His dedication to teaching was recognized by the president of Guyana, where he was awarded a lifetime honorary membership to the CineGuyana society.

In his free time, Professor Williams is a long-distance hiker. His favorite hike to date was a 125-mile winter hike through the Grand Canyon with his wife, Petra. He also enjoys hiking on the Appalachian and Long Trails and someday hopes to through-hike the Arizona Trail. 🌟

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HOW TO VIEW AND APPRECIATE GREAT MOVIES

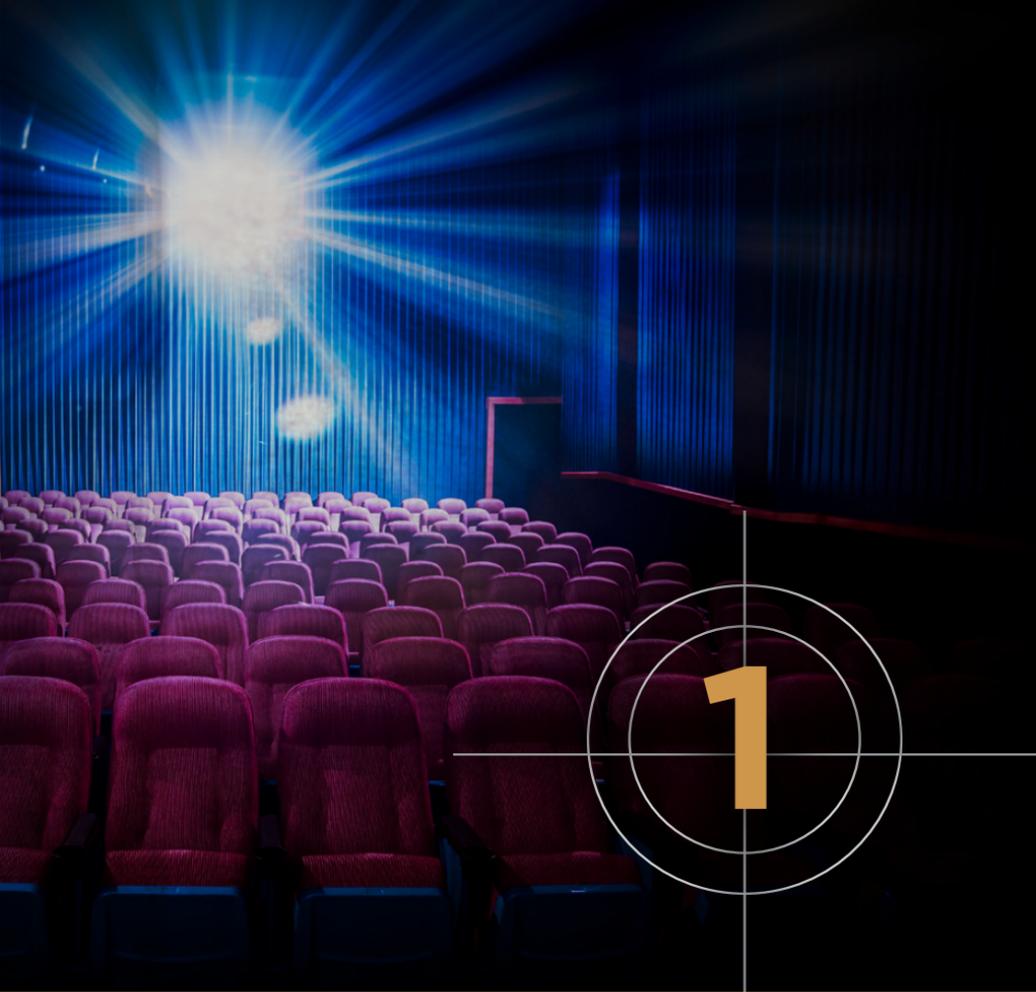
Filmmaking is a symphony of creative talents, each adding to the rhythm and harmony that become a feature film. In this course, professional filmmaker and award-winning professor Eric R. Williams will take you behind the scenes.

The course is broken down into three specific areas. The first section explores storytelling and screenwriting, providing an understanding of how genres work in the filmmaking world, how directors and screenwriters build tension and thematic ideas in their films, and how the entire production crew collaborates on a unified vision.

The second part of the series explores each of the individual production areas, from sound design to set design. Editing, special effects and musical scores help to enhance the films we see. In these lectures, you'll gain a deeper understanding of how these areas work together to influence the audience subconsciously. Different lectures use specific films as examples of how each department works. Among other films, *Good Will Hunting* is examined for framing and blocking, *Raging Bull* for editing, and *The Hurt Locker* for sound design.

The third and final section of the series focuses on the idea of character. Writers, directors, and actors all work with character, but each approach character in a different way. You'll gain a deeper appreciation of how characters are built, what their purpose is in a story as a whole, and why different characters behave the way they do.

By the end, you'll see how the characters tie all the way back the first idea of story. You'll recognize how story influences the production, how the production influences the characters, and how the characters, in turn, influence the story. All in all, the elements form a creative cycle—a symphony of creative decision making. ✨



THE ART OF THE SILVER SCREEN

For all of the glories of great theater, literature, music, and art, film offers an experience that no other artistic medium can approach. It is a storytelling time machine, able to transport the audience anywhere or to any time. It is a machine that guides the gaze, demands attention, and juxtaposes visual and auditory elements. Yet the machine also encapsulates this complexity into a communal experience that spreads an audience's attention across a finite swath of time.

This lecture looks at the beginnings of dramatic storytelling and how that evolved in regards to modern film. The lecture then turns to the key factor in captivating films: tension.

THE EVOLUTION OF A PLAYBOOK

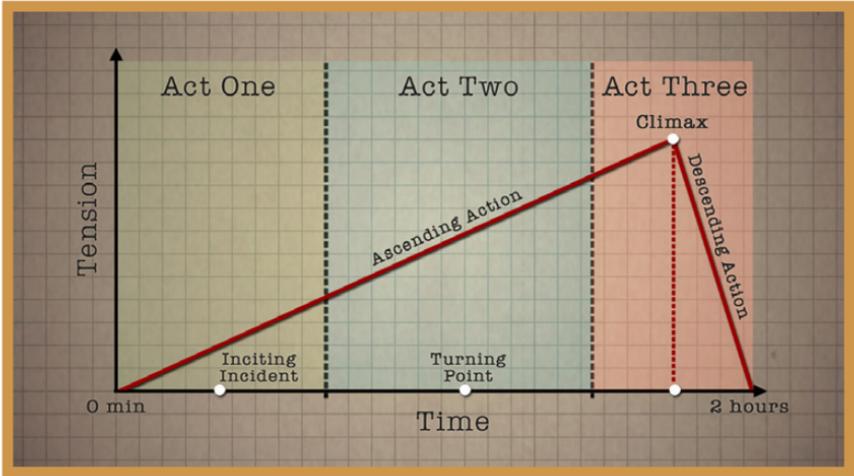
Around 350 BCE, the Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote his theory of drama (called *Poetics*). Nearly 2,000 years later, in the mid-1800s, a German playwright named Gustav Freytag took a stab at figuring out how dramatic stories work. He came up with a model known as Freytag's pyramid. More than 100 years after that, Syd Field applied different dramatic theories to film in the 1970s.

In the 1960s, it started to become possible to go to college and study film. As the 1960s turned into the 1970s, people started graduating from these programs. Among them were Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, and Martin Scorsese, who were responsible for blockbuster films such as *The Godfather*, *Star Wars*, and *Raging Bull*. Field began folding their films into his books and analyses.

As the 1970s turned into the 1980s, Hollywood started opening up to new funding sources. A wave of MBA graduates started making their way from the East Coast to the West Coast. They wanted a playbook for making films, and Field had one: a formula called the three-act structure.

TENSION IN THE THREE-ACT STRUCTURE

Though many great films don't follow the three-act structure, it contains the secret to making great films. Field found it; he just didn't know that he found it. In essence, the three-act structure builds rising tension through the three acts of a film.



Tension is often, but not always, conflict. Not every scene is an argument, and not every story is about a fight or murder. Tension can also be suspense—but again, not every film is a mystery or thriller. The five ways to create tension are anticipation, conflict, engagement, entertainment, and production.

Anticipation is based upon the ideas for dramatic tension. Through foreshadowing and by manipulating the information that the audience has, the audience anticipates a character's decisions and judges the expected fallout. The audience may also anticipate thematic connections within the story. By informing or withholding thematic and character information from the audience, storytellers can make the audience anticipate what they think will happen next,

FILM TENSION TOOLS

Films can use several tension-building tools, including but not limited to:

- 1 Withholding information from the audience or a character.
- 2 Following a character to see if they succeed in their goal.
- 3 Juxtaposing characters in conflict.
- 4 Music that creates a sense of tension and release in the audience.
- 5 Visual elements; for example, lines, shapes, color, light, depth, and movement help draw the viewer into the image.
- 6 Foreshadowing.

These tools, and others, tie in with in the five tension-creation techniques.

which creates a strong desire to watch what happens next to see if their predictions come true.

Conflict is more direct. Two characters, or two camps of characters, have opposing objectives. Alternatively, they may have the same objective, but for different reasons. This creates tension because we want to see who is going to win. Another method is a deadline: A character races against the clock. There can also be conflict between like-minded characters—for example, a pairing of a strong and weak character.

Engagement involves patterns. For instance, we might know that a character has to make a choice, and we know she has different options—we just don't know which path she'll choose. Another example is the audience knowing how a heist will go down, but wanting to see if the characters can pull it off.

Entertainment is just that: something to titillate the audience. This can involve nudity, jokes, or a performance, such as juggling or riding a horse. Additionally, there are some actors whose mere star power and acting talent is mesmerizing.

Production is probably the deepest set of factors in creating tension because it can be affected in so many ways. Music, the rhythm of editing, color, shape, camera movement, shot composition, and more can fascinate an audience.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Do you align yourself more with Kipen and the Schreiber theory, the Sarris and the auteur theory, or with Kael and the Academy when you think of the driving creative force behind a film?

Do you agree with the idea that tension is the driving force in narrative film? If so, are there ways to create tension that were not mentioned? If not, what would you identify as narrative film's driving force (or forces)?



WE ALL NEED ANOTHER HERO: UNIVERSAL STORIES

This lecture begins by uncovering the foundation of the hero's journey—a story structure that appears in countless films—and explores a few of the key ideas laid out by the structure's progenitor, Joseph Campbell. Next, the lecture shows how the hero's journey works in practice by working through each of its integral parts.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL AND THE HERO'S JOURNEY

Joseph Campbell was born in 1904, at a time when psychologists Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung were putting forth groundbreaking ideas about the subconscious mind. Both Freud and Jung believed that there were certain ideas and urges and intelligences buried inside the minds and hearts and souls of human beings. In short, as the 20th century was born, an idea was emerging that all human beings have the same basic cravings and understandings of the world.

These ideas intrigued Joseph Campbell, who decided to travel the world to compare stories from different cultures. He intended to collect as many stories as he could find to see if there are any commonalities. After more than a decade of research and traveling the world, Campbell finally claimed to have found something in common between all of the world's great stories. He had discovered what he called the monomyth.

The monomyth is a single story structure that most myths from around the world share, regardless of where or when they were created. Campbell wrote about this monomyth in his 1949 book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, where he claims that humans tell this same story over and over again. The details make each story seem unique.

In the 1960s, a student named George Lucas was studying film at the University of Southern California, where he was also taking anthropology classes. Lucas was, therefore, familiar with the monomyth and consciously decided to infuse Campbell's ideas into *Star Wars*.

Since then, people like Bill Moyers and Christopher Vogler have brought Campbell's ideas out to the general public through documentaries and books on screenwriting. Today, the monomyth is more popularly referred to as the hero's journey.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY: PART 1

The first part of the hero's journey consists of five main subparts. The first three are the hero in their ordinary world, a call to adventure, and the hero's refusal of the call. The fourth part consists of either a mentor encouraging the hero to heed the call, or a supernatural event forcing the hero into the adventure. In the fifth part, the hero enters the adventure. An example of this process occurs in *The Shawshank Redemption*, when Andy Dufresne reluctantly enters the new world of the prison and is mentored by Morgan Freeman's character, Red.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY: PART 2

The second part of the monomyth has four steps to it. In the first step, the hero passes the first threshold, which exists between the hero's ordinary world and the new world. An example would be a character learning the rules of prison. This helps both the character and the audience understand the new world.

Step two consists of tests along the road. Here, the audience learns what the character is made of. Allies typically appear here, or, if they joined earlier, the audience learns they are truly on the hero's side. For example, at this point in *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy meets the Scarecrow, the metallic



Tin Man, and the Cowardly Lion. They also do battle with the apple trees of the haunted forest.

In the third step, the hero must prepare for the upcoming challenges. The hero knows that they are closing in on their objective, and the team needs to make sure they are ready. Here, Dorothy is almost to Oz, where she and Toto will be able to get home. Dorothy and her companions are given a preparation ceremony in the palace of Oz, and told about how the Wizard of Oz will greet them.

As the second part of the hero's journey comes to a close, our hero seems ready. But then, almost without warning, everything our hero was working toward is ruined, which brings events to the fourth step: our hero's adventure reaches the bottom. Dorothy meets the Wizard and is told that he will only help her if she gets the broom of the Wicked Witch—a nearly impossible task that Dorothy is certainly not up for doing.

DEFINING A HERO

In a film, the central character doesn't always have to be heroic. Michael Corleone in *The Godfather*, for example, is a murdering gangster. Often, a more appropriate term for "hero" is "protagonist." The central character in any story is known as the protagonist.

Historically, the protagonist is also the character who goes through the most change. For example, Dorothy changes from wanting to run away from home to recognizing that there is no place like home, and Andy Dufresne changes from guilty to innocent.

The protagonist's companions often reflect the protagonist and their changes. Take Michael Corleone: When he combines the approaches of his brothers, he succeeds and changes from war hero to mafia godfather.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY: PART 3

The third step of the hero's journey has three steps. In the first step, the hero is tested yet again. It recalls the first wave of tests from part 2, but this time, things are different. The team has been strengthened by their near defeat.

As an example, Dorothy and her allies make their way into the Wicked Witch's stomping grounds and, even though Dorothy is captured, her team formulates a rescue plan. Dorothy stands up to the Wicked Witch and douses her with a soul-crushing bucket of water.

In the second step of part 3, the hero and their team retrieve their goal. Here, Dorothy gets the broom. Next, they move to the third step, when the hero is typically chased back to a place of safety and moves back across a new threshold. In Dorothy's case, the Wicked Witch's guards carry Dorothy and her team out of the castle in a giant parade. At this point of the story, the hero appears to be in good shape, but that changes in part 4.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY: PART 4

The fourth and final part of the hero's journey centers around the epic battle. This is the climax of the story. There are four steps to this part. In the first step, the hero confronts the enemy in a battle to the death. In *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy faces the Wizard at this point.

In this final battle, the hero is typically pushed to the extreme—the brink of death, literally or metaphorically—only to be resurrected and then triumph. This is the second step of part 4; for example, the Wizard ostracizes Dorothy and her friends, only to have Toto reveal the Wizard's weakness. This allows Dorothy to take him down to size with her newfound courage, intelligence, and passion.

In the third step, the victorious hero receives a hero's reward. Dorothy takes part in a reward ceremony where they are recognized for the valor and their commitment to their friends—a common theme in the hero's journey.

According to Joseph Campbell, the classic hero's journey ends with the hero returning home, either literally or metaphorically. When they return home, they carry with them new knowledge that they learned on their adventure. In Dorothy's case, she literally returns home to Kansas with the knowledge that there truly is no place like home.

CONCLUSION

Hundreds of great movies follow the steps of the hero's journey, including *Back to the Future*, *Jaws*, *Rear Window*, *Unforgiven*, and countless animated Disney movies. However, there are films that break the mold; for example, *The Godfather* is actually an antihero's journey. *Little Miss Sunshine* treats an entire family as a single heroic unit.

Even films that break the pattern reinforce the pattern, in a way. *The Godfather* is so powerful because it celebrates a gangster as most celebrate heroes. Regardless of whether a movie follows the hero's journey, it is affected by the hero's journey.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

What's your favorite movie, and do you think that it fits into the hero's journey model? Why or why not?

Think of other stories that you like; for example, Frank Darabont found the Stephen King short story that turned into *The Shawshank Redemption*. Do these stories fit into the hero's journey? How different are they?



MOVIE GENRE: IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK

This lecture focuses on movie genres, starting with a working definition of what makes a genre, which are known as super-genres in their broadest sense. The lecture will then break super-genres down further by looking at macro-genres and micro-genres. The lecture also focuses on three case studies of super-genres: action movies, thrillers, and life movies.

DEFINING GENRE

The defining elements of genre can be broken down into three categories: atmosphere, character, and story.

Atmospheric expectations for each genre can be identified by location, costumes and props, and specific visceral experiences that audiences anticipate for the film. War films take place in remote war-torn locations with soldiers and the enemy, fighting in battle for honor and country. Horror films take place in isolated areas of our society.

Character expectations for each genre can be identified by their general set of stock characters and their individual goals. Horror movies have a good character fighting for survival. A war movie has a soldier fighting for survival too, but the movie is really about a fight for honor and country.

Story expectations can be identified by their broad themes (such as penance for past sins in the horror genre).

These elements come into play even when they're not readily apparent, such as in satire movies. For example, *Blazing Saddles* is a satirical comedy, but its super-genre is western. It has commonalities with other westerns, such as *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, *Thelma and Louise*, and *No Country for Old Men*. They all feature elements like striking landscapes, shootouts, and single-minded individuals.

THE 11 SUPER-GENRES

This course's view is that there are 11 main super-genres. They are:

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 Action | 5 Life | 9 Thriller |
| 2 Crime | 6 Romance | 10 War |
| 3 Fantasy | 7 Science Fiction | 11 Western |
| 4 Horror | 8 Sports | |

These super-genres are further modified by factors like voice, pathway, and micro- and macro-genres.

VOICE AND PATHWAY

A film's voice is the creative decisions made in making the film. For example, will it be an animation or a musical? Will it be in black and white, eliminate dialogue, or use voiceovers? How much violence, sex, or gore will it contain?

A film's pathway is its way into the story. For example, it could be a buddy story, with twin protagonists. Other examples include road movies, coming of age tales, and humans versus technology. A pathway leads into the genre, but isn't the genre itself: A romance movie could use the road as its pathway.

MACRO-GENRES AND MICRO-GENRES

Macro-genres are categories that even further define the atmosphere, character, and story of a genre. For instance, the crime genre has many macro-genres, including detective movies, gangster movies, heist movies, political crime, and superhero movies.

These break down further into micro-genres. A superhero movie will typically fall into one of three categories: an origin story, a story where the superhero fights a personal battle, or a story where the superhero saves the world.

THE ACTION AND THRILLER SUPER-GENRES

The super-genres of action and thriller are largely similar, so they serve as an important point of focus when it comes to genre. The main difference between them is in how the story unfolds and how that story makes the audience feel.

An action movie makes the audience feel excited. It's a story between good and evil. *Die Hard* is an action movie: The bad guys are trying to rob the skyscraper by holding hostages, and John McClane—an off-duty cop—is going to try to stop them. The audience watches to see how the good guy is going to defeat the bad guys. That's the fun of it.

Thrillers, on the other hand, are designed to make the audience feel a sense of dread. In a thriller, the audience never really knows who to trust or what is going on. For instance, *Silence of the Lambs* is a thriller. Even through Clarice Starling, the protagonist, works for the FBI, she's only a student. She's scared, and she's in over her head, and the audience fears for her.

THE LIFE SUPER-GENRE

Another important case study is the life super-genre. Broadly speaking, such films fall into two categories: day-in-the-life stories and slice-of-life stories.

Slice-of-life stories give the audience a chance to live with a family or spend some time in a neighborhood to see the drama that unfolds. *Do the Right Thing* and *Good Will Hunting* both do this. Dramas unfold in these small circles, and the audience is invited in to experience them.

Day-in-the-life stories are a little different. In these stories, the audience joins the character to see how each seemingly small thing becomes important. The movie *Moonlight* is one such story. So is *12 Years a Slave*, which won Best Picture at the Oscars three years before *Moonlight* did.

It's true that *12 Years a Slave* involves kidnapping, escaping, and gut-wrenching, thrilling moments. However, it's really the day-by-day life of Solomon Northup. Screenwriter John Ridley has explained that he was tempted to use the trappings of other genres, such as shootouts, revenge, and escape plans. In the end, he decided that to live a day in the life of Solomon was more dramatic than anything he could have thought up for the film.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Do you agree with the basic premise that all narrative Hollywood films can fit under the umbrella of 11 super-genres? If not, do you think that there should be more super-genres, or fewer? If there are more, what are they? If you think there should be fewer, which ones would you eliminate?

Pick five films that you think might fit into one of the 11 super-genres. Compare the essence of each film's story, character, and atmosphere. Do you find more similarities or differences? Do they align with the super-genre expectations?



GENRE LAYERS AND AUDIENCE EXPECTATIONS

The previous lecture introduced the concept of 11 super-genres, or broad categories that every film fits under. This lecture turns to focus on macro-genres. They are 50 or so in number, and they classify films in even more detail. As a case study, the lecture uses the crime super-genre and six macro-genres that fit under it. The lecture then introduces yet another level of division: micro-genres.

CRIME'S MACRO-GENRES

Crime films typically explore themes of truth, justice, and freedom, and contain the central conflict of criminal versus lawman. The story tends to jump back and forth between the two sides. Six macro-genres easily fall under the crime super-genre. They are gangster movies, spy movies, heist movies, escape movies, cop movies (more broadly known as law-enforcement movies), and detective movies.

CRIME MACRO-GENRE MOVIE EXAMPLES

Below are example of films from each of the macro-genres that fall under the crime super-genre.

Cop: *Seven* or *The Silence of the Lambs*

Detective: *Chinatown* and *Sherlock Holmes*

Escape: *Cool Hand Luke* and *Midnight Express*

Gangster: *The Godfather* and *American Gangster*

Heist: *Reservoir Dogs* and *The Killing*

Spy: *Goldfinger* and *Three Days of the Condor*

THE 50 MACRO-GENRES

This course's view is that there are 50 macro-genres. They are:

1. Addiction
2. Adventure
3. Alien Invasion
4. Apocalyptic
5. Artificial Intelligence
6. Biography
7. Bro-/Wo-mance
8. Demonic
9. Disaster
10. Disease / Disability
11. Epic / Saga
12. Erotica
13. Escape
14. Family
15. Gangs/Punk/
Brothers in Arms
16. Gangster
17. Ghost/Spirits/Angels
18. Heist/Caper
19. Historical
20. Holiday
21. Identity
22. Killing
23. Law Enforcement
24. Legal
25. Love
26. Magical
27. Martial Arts
28. Medical
29. Military
30. Mission
31. Monster
32. Mystery/Detective
33. Political
34. Procedural
35. Protection
36. Psychological
37. Religious
38. Revenge/Justice
39. Romantic Comedy
40. Science Fantasy
41. School Films
42. Showbiz/Artistry
43. Slasher
44. Spy/Espionage
45. Superhero
46. Super Powers
47. Survival
48. Terror
49. Time Travel
50. Workplace

A large division exists between these macro-genres when it comes to whom the audience roots for. In gangster, heist, and escape movies, the audience almost always roots for the criminals. In spy, cop, and detective movies, the rooting interest is the law-enforcement characters.

Silence of the Lambs and *Cool Hand Luke* serve as contrasting examples. The former is a cop movie, where the cop is an FBI agent trying to save a woman from a serial killer. The audience roots for her to succeed—not Hannibal Lecter. *Cool Hand Luke*, meanwhile, is an escape movie where the audience wants the criminal to escape.

These are decisions made by the filmmakers, influenced by the expectations of the macro-genre combined with the super-genre. The super-genre provides the broad strokes, and the macro-genre fills in the details.

MICRO-GENRES

Each macro-genre has its own set of micro-genres. For instance, in a heist movie, the audience is informed of the protagonist's challenges early on, and the story is dedicated to a band of people systematically solving each problem until the robbery is attempted. Heists are rarely accomplished alone, so these films tend to rely on the heist group as a character. Often, there is infighting within the group, as each person has usually been chosen to join the caper because of their unique specialty rather than their ability to work well in small teams.

A heist movie typically falls into one of three kinds of film: It's a procedural, an impossible endeavor, or a tale. An example of a procedural is *The Killing*, which takes the audience step-by-step through the crime, which is an elaborate heist to rob a horse-betting track during one of its biggest races. Excitement for the audience comes from feeling like they're part of the heist.

This is in contrast to an impossible-endeavor film like *Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation*, where the mission is seemingly insurmountable. There are some procedural elements, but the story isn't told in a way that tries to pull the audience into the fold. Instead, the visceral enjoyment in this micro-genre comes from not knowing how the protagonist will pull the heist off.

The tale is simply a well-told story about a heist. The caper seems difficult, but the story is about the characters themselves. The heist is almost a backdrop. Quentin Tarantino's first film, *Reservoir Dogs*, is a perfect example. The audience doesn't even see the heist itself—only the aftermath and the preparation.

CONNECTIONS

Micro-genres, macro-genres, and super-genres are all connected. Take, for instance, the crime macro-genres of gangster, spy, heist, escape, cop, and detective. Those look crime-related on the surface, but they can actually go with any of the other 10 super-genres.

For example, *Bat*21*, a movie about a character shot down behind enemy lines, is a war movie, not a crime movie. Escape is its macro-genre, but the super-genre is war.

Another example is the 2016 movie *Hell or High Water*. It's a heist movie, with the micro-genre of tale. However, its super-genre is western. Westerns tend to focus on rugged individualism, family values, and honor much more than being held accountable for breaking the law.

QUESTION/ACTIVITY

As an audience member, do you buy into the idea that you watch movies with certain preconceived expectations based on the kind of movie (or genre) that you are going to see? Can you identify those expectations? If so, go and see a movie in that genre and find out if your expectations are met or subverted. What does that say about the filmmaker-audience relationship?



**POPCORN CAN WAIT:
STORY SHAPE AND TENSION**

This lecture discusses the general shapes of stories and how they relate to theme and tension. This, it looks at some more unusual shapes that filmmakers have used.

THE SHAPE OF A STORY

A story's shape is determined by the rhythm of that story. For example, the rhythm of a romance movie might be the pattern of scenes showing a boy and girl being unhappy apart, meeting and being happy together, growing apart and breaking up, drifting back together, and being happy once more. Each of those moves often contains multiple scenes. Such a shape allows filmmakers to tell the story from two different points of view.

Another reason for using that shape is tension, which keeps the audience wanting to know what happens next. An example would be one shot of an unhappy boy trying to decide whether or not to go to the dance, followed by a shot of an unhappy girl throwing her valentines in the trash and putting her dress away. Then, there's a knock at her door. The audience will want to know if it's the boy.

OTHER TYPES OF SHAPES

Another common story shape occurs in sports movies. There are usually two sides: the strong champions and the underdogs. The story follows the two sides; they keep getting closer and closer until they meet at the tournament. The rest of the story is their battle to win whatever is at stake.

Crime movies often follow a similar pattern: two sides—law enforcement and criminals—eventually meeting. The audience might see the crime, and then the investigation, and other actions building up to the ultimate meeting.

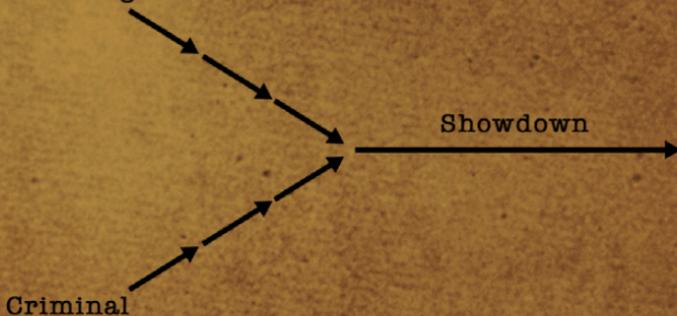
As a point of comparison, Martin Scorsese movies don't use this structure. He mostly tells his gangster stories from just one side: the gangsters. He creates tension with the characters themselves through internal conflict and through the audience's interest in the characters.

Scorsese does this intentionally. By illuminating only one half of the equation, he focuses the audience's attention on the people, not the crime. Scorsese isn't trying to teach that crime doesn't pay; he's trying to engage the audience more broadly in a culture.

THE SHAPE OF CRIME

The shape of a crime movie that spends time on both the criminals and law enforcement can typically be visualized as a V. The two sides start out on opposite sides of the top of the V before eventually meeting at the bottom—or final confrontation.

Crime fighter



Showdown



PLOT, STORY, AND SHAPE

There is a difference between plot and story. Plot is what happens and the order in which it happens. For an example of plot, take this: The queen died, and then the king died. Story is the emotion and the personality surrounding the plot: The queen died by being poisoned, and then the king died from a broken heart.

Scorsese prefers story over plot, or often instead of plot. He likes character and dialogue. The plot and the shape of the story tend to be more amorphous. The same goes with filmmaker Terrence Malick.

Nevertheless, many sports movies and crime movies have similar shapes. That makes sense because their stories play off of simple dichotomies: good and bad, strong and weak, and so forth. Their themes typically play off of these dichotomies.

Similarly, the war and horror genres also share their own general story shape, which reinforces the common themes found in each of these genres. Broadly speaking, these genres are more often about groups—a squad of soldiers on a mission or a group of teenagers in the woods—that thematically stand in for society.

The isolated individuals in a horror movie can represent the collective ills of society: Some characters are lustful, uncaring, vain, deceitful, or shallow. Most of all, they're rule breakers. Typically, they are the ones who will die. Thematically, the lone survivor is often the one who is most pure, making a morality tale.

War movies have a similar shape, but a different theme. In war movies, death and survival are not a morality tale. It's a coin toss: Anybody can die at any time. Still, in a war movie, the characters die one or two at a time, whittling away the group until there are only a few (or just one) left standing. That surviving character carries the theme. Themes can be bravery, cleverness, innocence, the randomness of war, and so on.

BREAKING THE PATTERN

Filmmakers often break longstanding patterns. For example, Quentin Tarantino borrows story structures from other genres. In the case of *Pulp Fiction*, he borrows a circular narrative from pulp fiction anthologies where different stories with similar and overlapping characters are collected in one publication. They could be read in any order, as the linear nature of the stories is not as important as the stories themselves. Grafting that structure into a film, a character may die in one thread, but reappear in a different thread later in the movie.

Tarantino uses this narrative quirk to underline his theme of transformation and rebirth. In a film where a gangster takes bullets missing him as a sign from God, a dead character reappearing in the story and finishing out the movie by telling an earlier part of the story last doesn't seem to be out of place.

Such a structure gives the audience a chance to reflect on the ideas of transformation, life, death, and rebirth after the movie is over. Tarantino's clever structure helps light that intellectual spark.

Films are a dance between the stories of its characters. Through editing, films jump from character to character from story to story. This editing creates a rhythm and a shape to the film. These story shapes strongly affect the way we watch, and enjoy, great movies.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Try to sketch out the basic story shape for two very different kinds of movies. Either try *No Country for Old Men* and *Bull Durham*, or *Little Miss Sunshine* and *Thelma and Louise*. What do you notice about the story shape of each film? How does that shape relate to either the theme or the story?

Pick a movie in one of the following genres: romance, sports, or war. Make sure it's not one of the films mentioned in the lecture. Then, watch the movie and try to sketch out its general shape. Does it meet or differ from your expectations? If it meets your expectation, was that satisfying? If it diverted from your expectations, do you think there was a reason for that choice, or was the story shape simply random or chaotic?



THEMES ON SCREEN

Theme—the subject of this lecture—is an integral part of filmmaking. In great films, theme connects in some way to every aspect of the creative process, from shot selection to editing choices, color, dialogue, set design, and musical scores. This lecture examines approaches to theme, five thematic forms, and how different filmmakers deliver themes to the audience.

APPROACHES TO THEME

A traditional approach to theme is one where the filmmaker tells a story where the main character changes, and this change illustrates to the audience the theme of the movie. A classic example might be the movie *Spider-Man*, where the moral of the story is: “With great power comes great responsibility.”

This is a moral lesson that Peter Parker, the young man who becomes Spider-Man, may not have considered at the start of the film. However, after two hours of breathtaking superhero action, he understands the lesson. The audience understands the change that Peter went through and accepts the moral as true.

For the purposes of this lecture, envision two ends of a thematic spectrum: traditional on one end and nontraditional on the other. Traditional filmmakers have three defining characteristics when it comes to theme:

1. The filmmaker believes that their role is to be part educator, philosopher, or theologian.
2. They do this by developing one clean, concise theme, or a few clearly complementary themes.
3. These themes are designed to spark a change in the protagonist and an understanding in the audience.

Subsequently, on the other end of the spectrum, nontraditional filmmakers also have three defining characteristics.

1. They utilize a variety of messy and complex themes, which are often contradictory or shifting throughout the story.
2. They don't want to moralize or lecture to the audience. They simply want to explore the complexities of life.
3. Eliciting a change or understanding in the audience isn't the point of the story. It might happen incidentally, but it's not the goal.

David Mamet's screenplay for *Glengarry Glen Ross* is a great example of using a nontraditional approach. It's a crime movie about a robbery that takes place in a bottom-of-the-barrel real estate office. Mamet doesn't seem to care that anyone learns from the crime or from who is caught. By the end, the guilty are imprisoned, but the story doesn't change any of the characters or the audience.

Even though *Glengarry Glen Ross* is nontraditional in its approach, it still has a theme. It's not just a random story. There is cohesion: These characters are capitalistic to their core, each caught in a financial battle for survival.

THE BIRTH OF THEME

When a film is born, it's born as a script, the pages of which contain the theme. The screenwriter has already chosen a traditional or a nontraditional approach. They have also chosen one of the five forms of theme (moral message, descriptive statement, question, binary exploration, or abstract idea).

And when a director, producer, actor, or cinematographer reads the script, they are trying to determine when and how the theme will make its way into the film. For instance, the cinematographer may

FIVE TYPES OF THEME

Movie themes are a collection of abstract ideas made concrete by the telling of the story. These abstract ideas can be made concrete in five specific ways.

- 1** A theme can be a moral message. For example, the film *Shrek* tells the audience, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.”
- 2** Theme can be a descriptive statement, such as: “Love conquers all.” This is an idea that the romance film *Moulin Rouge* firmly embraces without it becoming a moral to live by.
- 3** Theme can take the form of a question. Mamet doesn’t deliver a specific message in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, but he certainly asks, “What has happened to the American dream?”
- 4** Theme can be a binary exploration, such as peace versus violence. Spike Lee explores the binary of love versus hate in his classic film *Do the Right Thing*.
- 5** Theme can simply be an abstract idea, like racism. The movie *Crash* explored racism in many manifestations without developing a specific message.

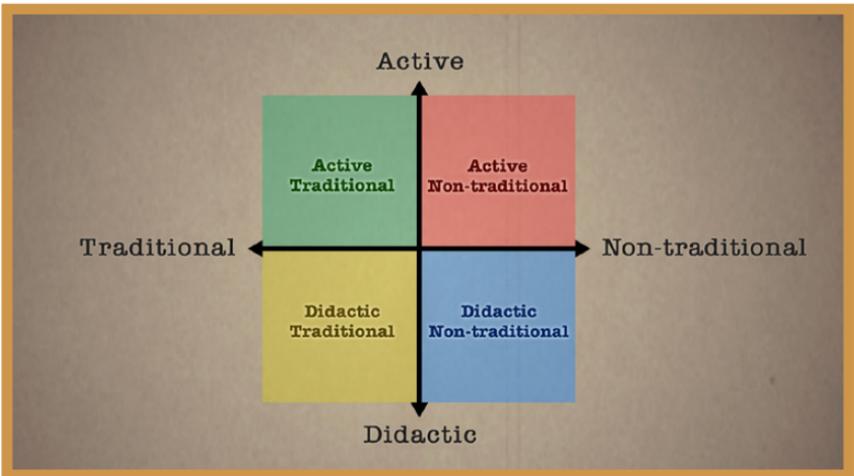
work with the director to bring the theme more to the surface visually with certain shots, colors, or camera angles. They might depict strength or weakness depending on the theme.

ACTIVE VERSUS DIDACTIC

On its own, the approach of traditional versus nontraditional isn't enough to describe everything there is to consider about theme. Another important consideration is how the storytellers will infuse the theme into their films.

The strongest delivery method is usually dialogue. Either by direct inclusion or intentional exclusion, dialogue informs the story's theme. That dialogue can be described as either didactic or active. When someone speaks with the intention of teaching something, it is didactic.

Active storytelling is when the audience is invited to make an intellectual leap on their own. In *The Dark Knight*, the villain who fights Batman, the Joker, tells two very different stories describing



how he became so hideously disfigured. The Joker tells some people that he did it to himself, but to others, the Joker says that his father abused him.

Both stories are delivered didactically, yet they are completely contradictory, and neither story is confirmed. That leads the audience to wonder why he is telling two different stories. The conclusion is that the Joker is a psychotic liar. Such an approach engages the audience actively.

Great filmmakers use both active and didactic approaches in traditional and nontraditional ways. The four elements are simply tools that an audience can use to think through the ways in which theme is used. For specific case studies and demonstrations of each approach, refer to the video lecture.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

As an audience member, do you prefer movies that take a more traditional approach to theme (one with a message that is delivered by the storyteller), or do you prefer movies that have a more nontraditional approach to theme? If you are a traditionalist, are there specific themes that attract you?

Pick three movies that you enjoy watching over and over again and pick three that your best friend likes to watch repeatedly. Now, try to place these six films on the theme matrix. Do you notice any patterns?



**PARADIGM SHIFT: *CITIZEN
KANE AND CASABLANCA***

Citizen Kane (released in 1941) and *Casablanca* (released in 1942) make up the yin and yang of the foundation of filmmaking. This lecture focuses on how these two great films created the foundation and how they have influenced other filmmakers for more than 75 years.

CASABLANCA

People don't hail *Casablanca* for its groundbreaking techniques or its revolutionary use of sound design or special effects. However, *Casablanca* is a movie that people watch over and over again. Viewers are drawn to the story for three interrelated reasons: the characters, the theme, and the ending.

The characters in *Casablanca* are unique—or at least, they were unique at the time. The main character—Rick, played by Humphrey Bogart—was a new kind of hero in Hollywood. He was a rebel and a heavy drinker. He hid in the shadows, sporting a shady past and a penchant for taking advantage of a situation. The woman he loved—Ilsa, played by Ingrid Bergman—was no different: a backstabbing spy in the midst of a dirty war.

Casablanca's characters were an anomaly back then, but they soon became more common. Rebellious heroism and unexplained duplicity can be tracked in great movies ever since: *Rebel Without a Cause* in the 1950s, *Klute* in the 1970s, *La Femme Nikita* in the 90s, and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* in the 2010s to name just a few.

Naturally, different character types led to different types of endings to these stories. If a story was about a good guy, then Hollywood would have him win at the end. If the story was about a bad guy, then he lost in the end. However, if a character is a mix of good and bad, it only makes sense that the ending might be contradictory too.

Rick doesn't get the girl. He doesn't escape Casablanca. He doesn't win the war, and neither does Ilsa. Most Hollywood movies back then resolved their problems by the end of the film, but Rick and Ilsa's continue. That was new and fresh to American audiences. Future filmmakers embraced that idea. Examples include *Vertigo* in the 1950s, *Planet of the Apes* in the 1960s, *Apocalypse Now* in the 1970s, *Blade Runner* in the 1980s, *Basic Instinct* in the 1990s, and *Moonlight* from recent years.

A heroically ambiguous ending quite often makes the audience rethink the entire film. If Rick and Ilsa had ended up together, then perhaps the audience would leave the theater with the classic sense that true love always finds a way. Instead, the unexpected ending makes the audience consider ideas of individualism, sacrifice, and the nobility of the stranger in a strange land.

CITIZEN KANE: STORY

In the second act of *Casablanca*, a large amount of the story is told in flashback. In the 1940s, a non-linear story was quite unorthodox. Stories usually weren't told out of order in films back then—except for *Citizen Kane*.

Citizen Kane starts with the death of Charles Foster Kane. This death begins a mystery, a reporter's search for the meaning of Kane's dying words: "Rosebud." Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull* uses a similar technique: bookending the film in the present, with the entire rest of the film told in flashback. *Saving Private Ryan* and many other great films use the technique as well.

CITIZEN KANE: PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES

Citizen Kane was Orson Welles's directorial debut. Even though he was only 25 years old at the time, Welles had an extensive resume as

a producer and director of radio and stage plays. Before he directed *Citizen Kane*, he was well known for directing the 1938 broadcast of *War of the Worlds*. He carried storytelling techniques from radio and theater into filmmaking.

At age 25, Welles had no problem casting himself as the lead, despite the fact that the role is a character who ages from his 20s well into his 70s. Welles was fearless. Together with cinematographer Gregg Toland (age 36), they set off to make filmmaking history.

There was a visual and auditory familiarity to films back then. Most scenes were three or four minutes long. Actors would perform their lines one at a time, and when an actor spoke, they would typically say their line in close or medium shot. The shots were nearly always shot at eye level because if the camera tilted up, the audience would see the lighting grid.

The audio in each scene was specific to the scene; there was no overlapping of sounds between scenes. When a scene began, the audio began. When a scene ended, the audio ended. Welles was about to change all of that.

CITIZEN KANE: FOCUS

The first important technique Welles used is universal focus or an infinite depth of field, meaning that everything in the frame is in focus. This wasn't the case before: Typically, a character would be in focus, and then the background dropped off and was out of focus. This is called a shallow depth of field, and it tends to focus the audience's attention on what is in focus.

However, Welles came from theater, and in theater the audience is able to focus their attention to anything that is on the stage. Welles wanted to use this technique in film to allow multiple messages to be delivered at any one time.



For instance, in a famous scene from *Citizen Kane*, a woman is speaking to a lawyer in the living room. This is the main action of the scene, but in the next room—behind them—a man is listening to their conversation. Further behind them still, a young boy is playing in the snow out the window. The boy is the topic of the woman's conversation, and the audience is free to focus their attention on the woman, the man, or the boy—each at a different visual depth in the scene.

This idea of universal focus is now routinely used in films to add complexity to a scene, and also to put the audience off-guard psychologically as they are invited to weigh all of the options the main character is weighing. For example, this technique is present in *The Manchurian Candidate*, *Saving Private Ryan*, and *Zodiac*.

CITIZEN KANE: AUDIO

To complement his idea of universal focus to add depth to the image, Welles also developed the idea of deep sound—that is, using various layers of volume to create a sense of depth. Someone might

be talking as the central point of the scene, but the audience might also be able to hear the sounds of a party in the next room and the sounds of the street off in the distance. This offered the audience a depth and a variety of sound that added complexity to the story.

Brian De Palma and the Coen brothers are filmmakers who often make use of deep sound techniques. The films *Blow Out*, *No Country for Old Men*, and *Barton Fink* are examples. The same techniques are present in the French masterpiece *Delicatessen* and the Chinese action movie *House of Flying Daggers*.

CITIZEN KANE: LONG TAKES AND OVERLAPPING AUDIO

Welles put the idea of long takes and overlapping audio into the forefront of movie storytelling. Before *Citizen Kane*, most scenes were three to four minutes long, routinely edited to give each actor a medium shot or close-up, during which they delivered their lines.

Welles was more interested in atmosphere and taking the audience into that atmosphere. He cast the film with his old friends from the Mercury Theater. They were stage actors who were used to memorizing entire plays. To them, a five-to-seven-minute scene was no problem. They could speak more naturally in a long take, lessening the need for cutting.

In the coming decades, Stanley Kubrick reveled in long takes. Some of his most memorable are from *2001* and *The Shining*, but Kubrick was using extensive long shots as early as 1957 with his war epic *Paths of Glory*. Jim Jarmusch also embraces the use of long takes, as does Martin Scorsese. Alfonso Cuarón in *Children of Men* provides another example.

Because Welles was using long takes and eschewing isolated shots for dialogue, the characters didn't need to speak one at a time. In Welles's

experience in radio, actors frequently stepped on each other's lines. Overlapping dialogue seemed more natural. With long takes shot with universal focus, Welles simply recorded his actors in one take and recorded the overlapping audio right there on set. He hid the microphones all around the set and recorded the audio naturally.

In the 1970s, Robert Altman became known for his use of overlapping dialogue in films such as *Nashville* and *MASH*. More recently, director Alejandro González Iñárritu used this technique in the 2014 Academy Award-winning film *Birdman*.

CITIZEN KANE: MUSIC

Welles's fifth technique took the idea of huge, sweeping film scores and whittled them down to small musical cues. In conjunction with his composer Bernard Herrmann, Welles create short (5 to 15 second) pieces of music. This was just enough to give a hint to the audience of how the character is feeling or to set the mood.

John Carpenter was a master of such musical cues in his horror films *Halloween* and *The Thing*, just as Christopher Nolan used it in his mind-bending crime film, *Memento*. More recently, the technique was used to great effect in the biographical film *The Imitation Game*.

Welles also used these musical cues to bridge one scene to the next scene. Two relevant editing techniques are J-cuts and L-cuts. In a J-cut, the audience hears something from the next scene before that scene begins. In an L-cut, the film cuts visually to the next scene, but the audience continues to hear the previous scene.

These types of transitions were not known to the general public before *Citizen Kane*. It didn't hurt that these sorts of techniques had been used in theater and radio well before the 1940s, but in film, they were new. Examples of films that use such cuts are *Easy Rider*, *Memento*, and *Saving Private Ryan*.

CITIZEN KANE: LOW-ANGLE SHOTS

Citizen Kane also used low-angle shots to make the protagonist seem more menacing. Welles didn't exactly invent this technique. History tends to attribute this technique to filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, who worked as a propagandist for the Nazis and the Third Reich.

Welles didn't invent the shot, but he and Toland knew enough about the psychological effects of the audience looking up at the actors on stage to know that the camera position would influence the crowd's perception of Charles Foster Kane. Welles moved the technique into the realm of fictional storytelling on film.

There were no ceilings in Hollywood sets because that's where they hung the lights. Welles didn't care. He hired carpenters to build ceilings in his sets. Then, he hired contractors to dig through the floors or dig trenches if they were outside. Then, the camera crew could get below floor level and shoot up at the domineering Welles as he portrayed Kane.

Christopher Nolan does this in *The Dark Knight* to make Batman look more heroic and the Joker look more menacing. Kubrick uses it repeatedly, as does Francis Ford Coppola (most notably in *The Godfather*). Terry Gilliam also uses the technique, especially in *Twelve Monkeys*.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Survey your film-savvy friends to see how they remember *Casablanca* and *Citizen Kane*. If the point of view of the lecture is accurate, people will remember *Casablanca* with quotes, impersonations, and memories about the characters. They'll think of *Citizen Kane* through the lens of production, talking about camera angles, sound design, and long takes.

Check this prediction against your own experience and the memories of your friends.

Try watching three films in the course of one weekend. One film should be pre-1940. The second should be post-1950. They should both be in the same genre. Notice the difference between the two films (both in terms of characters and filmmaking techniques). Then, watch either *Casablanca* or *Citizen Kane* to see if you recognize them as a filmmaking bridge between the two eras.



THE LANGUAGE OF VISUAL STORYTELLING

Each frame of film is a still image. Collectively, they turn into a movie. These frames of film and the act of editing them together to illustrate movement control how a story is told. Just as an author controls the words, syntax, and paragraphs of a novel, the filmmaker controls the frame, scene, and sequence for a movie. This guidebook chapter complements the video lecture by providing definitions of tools and concepts discussed in the video.

Affinity: Similarity between two elements. Example of use: In the opening sequence of *Jaws*, the boy and girl are both bathed in warm light, have long hair, and are shot in medium shots.

Color: Can be random (as in a documentary) or orchestrated (as in *Moonlight*, which continually uses the same color palette of red, blue, and green). Sometimes used to evoke emotion, as with red representing passion (or lack thereof) in *American Beauty*.

Contrast: Difference between two elements. Example of use: Batman's strong, square jaw in contrast to the Joker's triangular, rat-like features in *The Dark Knight*.

Close-up: Focuses attention on the emotions and possibly the thoughts of the character.

Dolly: Used to make the camera itself move, as in tracking shots. The effect is as if you're moving along with it. Example of use: The opening sequence of *Jaws*.

High-angle shot: The camera looks down on its subject. Can make the subject look less menacing or powerful.

Light: Example of use: The orange firelight warmly lights the partygoers in the opening sequence of *Jaws*, while the ocean, by contrast, is cold and blue.





Low-Angle Shot



High-Angle Shot

Lines: Frequently used by directors to focus the audience's attention on key moments of the story. Can also separate or connect elements or characters.

Low-angle shot: The camera looks up at its subject. Can make the subject look more menacing or powerful.

Medium shot: A more neutral, less invasive shot than a close-up.

Over-the-shoulder shot: The camera's perspective is from the shoulder of a person.

Panning: The camera swivels left and right on a tripod. The effect is as if your head is swiveling, as at a tennis match.

Shape: Can be used to build contrast or affinity.

Space: Can be used to connect or distance characters or elements.

Wide shot: Allows the audience to see the character in context to his or her surroundings.

Zoom: The camera zooms in to make the shot closer. Feels more artificial than a dolly shot.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Choose a few movies that you like from your past. Then, go back and watch them with fresh eyes. Instead of listening to the story, turn the volume down. Focus your eyes and really watch the shapes and the colors of the film and its characters. Think about the shapes that they represent and the colors that represent the characters as they transition through the story. Watch to see if these shapes and colors change during the story. Ask yourself: If they changed, why?

Choose a genre. (Crime is always good for this exercise, but any genre will do.) Then, thinking in broad terms, define the characters and personalities that you would expect to see in the genre. As you consider the characters, draw a general doodle of what these character types might look like. For instance, is the police officer you have in mind a square-jawed tough guy or more friendly? Does the villain look like a rat or a fox? If so, what shape does each suggest? Once you've done this, go see a movie in the genre that you chose. Examine the general shapes that certain characters embody. Consider facial hair, clothing, and how the environment might affect their shape. Is there a connection between the blind doodles that you created and what you observed while watching the film?



BUILDING SCREEN SPACE: BLOCKING AND FRAMING

On a basic level, blocking a scene involves where and when the characters move within the space. Framing is the way in which the blocking is captured by a camera. This lecture explores the intricacies of blocking and framing a good scene.

LINES, SHAPE, AND SCALE

Both framing and blocking can be broken down into the elements of lines, shape, and scale. When directors consider the lines in a frame, they consider both actual lines and virtual lines. Actual lines are visible, and virtual lines are lines that are implied. The below storyboard images representing a scene from *The Wizard of Oz* (directed by Victor Fleming) demonstrate these ideas.



The above storyboard image is from the scene when Dorothy is being welcomed to Oz by the Munchkins, the Lollipop Guild, the Lullaby League, and their representatives. In this opening shot, take note that the shape of the Lullaby League members and the shape of Dorothy are the same. The actual lines of the women's skirts make all four of them triangular.

Also notice how large Dorothy is in the frame. In scale, Dorothy appears larger than the three members of the Lullaby League. That makes sense because she is not a munchkin from Oz. She's a human from Kansas. She's larger, and she doesn't belong, which is part of the story of her entering a new land.

However, the point of this scene is that this group accepts Dorothy. It's the role of the director to block this scene to demonstrate that acceptance. To do so, he uses actual lines to create the shape of triangles, leading to similarity between the triangles of the munchkins and the triangle of Dorothy.



The director also uses scale to differentiate the two: Dorothy is large in scale, and the Lullaby League is smaller in scale. As shown above, virtual lines accentuate this difference. In this case, the eye lines of the characters create the virtual lines. The Lullaby League looks up at Dorothy and she looks down at them—again, highlighting the difference in scale and underlining Dorothy as an outsider.



After the Lollipop Guild arrives, the scene punches into a medium shot, as shown above. The director lowers the camera, which raises the horizon line in the background. By raising this virtual line, he makes these three men seem bigger. The audience can start to see the munchkins large on the screen as they saw Dorothy in the previous shot.

As part of the scene's song ends, several things happen: All of the townspeople rush in to surround Dorothy, and the camera rises. The horizon line disappears, and by the end of the shot, Dorothy appears to be just as tall as everyone else. Dorothy no longer dominates in size—only in the height of virtual lines—as shown below:



Even that changes. In this very next shot, Dorothy is now on equal footing with the townspeople. She has been welcomed into the group. Even though Dorothy never moved, the framing of the scene mirrored the story of the scene. By the time the scene ends, Dorothy fits right in:



DEPTH OF FIELD

Directors and cinematographers can use depth of field—that is, how much of a shot is in focus—to call attention to certain characters or elements of a shot. For example, a character who is in control of a scene might be in focus, with their less powerful counterpart diminished by being out of focus. Refer to the video lecture for a discussion of this technique in *Good Will Hunting*.



THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE

The 1962 film *The Manchurian Candidate*—directed by John Frankenheimer and lensed by Lionel Lindon—used some amazing blocking and framing techniques to get inside the mind of its main characters. The story involves a troop of American soldiers during the Korean War who get ambushed, brainwashed, and return to the United States as heroes. Years later, the surviving members begin to suspect that their memories of the events were implanted, rather than real.

One scene early in the film is 90 seconds long with no cuts, featuring a 360-degree sweep from the camera. The scene, which is a dream, starts with a troop of American soldiers in complete combat gear smoking cigarettes and sitting in the middle of a ladies' tea party, discussing how to grow hydrangeas. The room is filled with other women, taking notes and nibbling cookies.

However, when the camera returns to the soldiers, they are no longer sitting at a hydrangea party. They are sitting in a communist lecture hall. A Chinese scientist has replaced the woman who was speaking. Posters of Mao and Stalin are on the wall. The scientist explains that the soldiers have been brainwashed. While they are actually sitting in this lecture hall, they think they are waiting out a storm at a ladies' tea party.

For the next four minutes, the shots are a strange scramble of images. Sometimes the tea party lady is speaking in front of communist scientists, and sometimes the tea party audience listens to the Chinese scientist. The soldiers answer the scientist, but refer to him as “ma'am.” Sometimes the soldiers' background is a lecture hall, and sometimes it is a greenhouse. As a whole, the sequence is hallucinatory and dreamlike, but when the soldier having the dream wakes up, the audience knows he has been brainwashed.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Keep in mind that there are at least 16 different configurations for two people to interact in a scene (one facing north with the other facing south, and so on). The next time you are in a public space and have to opportunity to people watch, notice how people naturally interact with each other. Do they face one another, or do they look off in different directions? Can you gauge the tenor of the conversation by their blocking?

Over the years, a number of movies have been remade. One example from the lecture is *The Manchurian Candidate*. Whether you choose this movie or another is up to you, but watch both versions of the same story, paying special attention to how the same scene is blocked by different directors. Do you prefer one approach to blocking a scene over the other? If so, can you put your finger on the specific reason why you prefer that particular version?



THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: POWERFUL EDITING

An old film production adage states that a movie is created three times: once when it is written, the second time as it is being directed, and the third time during the editing process. This lecture focuses on the third of those steps, but to call editing the “final step” is a misnomer. When looked at as the insertion, removal, and organization of information, editing happens throughout each stage.

First, this lecture looks at the macro approach to editing—that is, how the story itself can be conceptualized as a whole. Next, the lecture turns to the sequence level of editing: The film as a whole can be broken down into acts, made up of sequences, which tell a story across various scenes. Finally, the lecture turns to editing on the micro level—that is, the scene itself.

THE MACRO LEVEL: *RASHOMON*

The macro level of editing begins with the idea that a movie has two parts: the narrative and the narration. The narrative is the story being told, and the narration is the way in which that story is told. The 1950 Japanese crime movie *Rashomon* exemplifies this idea.

The story is simple: A crime has been committed, and witnesses are called in to testify about what happened. Most filmmakers embrace the idea that there is only one truth to what happened, which filmmakers deliver to the audience. That’s not the case with *Rashomon*, which provides four truths.

Four different characters—each involved some way in the crime—tell their tale. Director Akira Kurosawa shows the events each time, repeating (each in a different way) and diverting (each in a different way) from the other person’s perspective. This is one narrative with four different narrations. In the end, the audience is left to decide which—if any—of the narrations are true.

THE SEQUENCE LEVEL: *AMERICAN BEAUTY*

A story can be conceptualized as a series of sequences, which are series of scenes that work in unison. At this level, an editor and director truly work in tandem to communicate with the audience subtextually.

The 2000 Academy Award–winning movie *American Beauty* was directed by Sam Mendes and edited by Tariq Anwar and Christopher Greenbury. One of the techniques that Mendes, Anwar, and Greenbury best utilize is called point of interest—that is, the filmmakers' ability to control and manipulate where the audience is focusing their attention.

By using light, color, motion, and other framing techniques, a director can lure the audience's eyes to different parts of the screen. Likewise, an editor can make effective cuts, removing what the audience's eyes were looking at and making them search for something new. With each cut, a new point of interest is developed.

In *American Beauty*, there is a sequence where a teenager named Ricky Fitts is getting ready for school and being driven to school by his father. It's a simple sequence of three scenes: Ricky has breakfast with his parents, new neighbors come by to say hello, and Ricky and his dad drive to school.

In the breakfast scene, a majority of the shots are between the father and son, both framed in the center of the screen. This way, even when the film cuts between father and son, the point of interest remains the same. Father and son are in emotional harmony, and the two shots are in visual harmony as well:



Next, the neighbors arrive. This scene is simple. It involves one shot of the neighbors and one of father and son. Story-wise, the neighbors introduce the idea of homosexuality into the Fitts household, and this splits the father and son along ideological lines. The split is present in the editing and the framing: The neighbors are together, but in the shots of father and son, the audience has to shift their view left or right to decide which character to give attention to:



The third scene takes place in the car. After a few establishing shots, and a moment to get the scene started, the two men begin arguing. They are on opposite sides of an issue, and therefore the filmmakers place them on opposite sides of the screen. Through framing and editing, the audience's point of interest is split, just as the men are split on this issue:



THE KULESHOV EFFECT

In the 1910s and 1920, Soviet filmmaker Lev Kuleshov experimented with montages. He took a shot of a single man staring blankly into a camera. First, he edited this shot together with a bowl of soup. He showed the sequence to people, who mostly thought the man was hungry.

Next, he edited the shot of the man together with a shot of a dead body or an alive, beautiful woman, and then showed it to people. Viewers thought the sequence meant the man was sad or in love.

Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein called this the Kuleshov effect, and he demonstrated early in the history of film that two shots edited together can create a third impression in the audience's mind.

THE SCENE LEVEL: *RAGING BULL*

An example from the movie *Raging Bull* demonstrates the power of editing on the scene level. In the second act, the boxer Jake is having marital problems. He's a jealous husband. One evening, before Jake is about to fight an opponent named Janiro, his wife off-handedly calls Janiro good-looking. This doesn't sit well with Jake.

A scene starts with Jake coming into the bedroom and waking up his wife. For 45 seconds, he asks her what she meant by the comment, and his wife dismisses her comment as meaningless. The scene between Jake and his wife ends without conflict, but instead with Jake sitting on the edge of the bed, thinking.

Next, editor Thelma Schoonmaker smash cuts to a close up of a man's face being smashed in. This is only a one-second shot, but it demonstrates the Kuleshov effect. The next cut is wide, with a title card: Jake is fighting Janiro in New York in 1947.

Schoonmaker cuts this 60-second scene into three parts (beginning, middle, and end), with each part separated by a wide shot to break it up. Part one is two quick shots of Janiro's face being smashed and one shot of Jake, who is doing the smashing. Next is a wide shot: Jake's winning.

Part two shows Jake becoming ferocious. He holds Janiro's head with one hand and beats him with the other. The audio slows and sound effects pop. Janiro's nose is broken, and blood streams from his eye. Next is another wide shot; the sound returns to normal, and Janiro stumbles across the ring, then stood up against the ropes for the slaughter.

In part three, Janiro can't fight back, and the audience knows it. There are three quick shots as Jake pulverizes Janiro. Then, Jake seems to almost knock the camera crooked, and it follows the unconscious Janiro to the mat. Next is a reverse shot of Jake, which is a low-angle shot to accentuate his strength.

However, the scene isn't over yet, because this isn't a scene about the fight. Rather, the scene is about anger and jealousy. The next shot is Jake looking out into the audience, where he sees his wife. The audience realizes the reason Jake beat Janiro so viciously was her off-hand comment and their bedroom conversation. This is the Kuleshov effect at work, and an approach to editing that created a beginning, middle, and end within 60 seconds.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

The macro approach to editing has a lot to do with the shape of the film. Think of some films that tell their stories in interesting ways. Then, see if you can find the macro approach to editing that the filmmakers used. Does the editing affect the shape of

the film? Do the editing choices reflect some sort of deeper meaning about the characters or the theme of the movie?

Action scenes and sports scenes are always fun to analyze because there is a lot going on in a very short amount of time. If you are interested in gaining a deeper appreciation of the shot-by-shot decisions of editing, take your favorite action scene and watch it shot by shot. Analyze each shot, trying to determine when and why the editors cut to the next shot. Does it have something to do with the audience's point of interest, or are there other reasons at play?



11

**SOUND DESIGN AND
ACOUSTIC ILLUSION**

This lecture explores sound in filmmaking. First, it considers the four general approaches to sound design. Then, it compares and contrasts two war films—*The Hurt Locker* and *Apocalypse Now*—to understand how sound design enhances the story on a subconscious level. Finally, it visits an iconic scene in *The Godfather* and breaks down exactly how director Francis Ford Coppola worked with influential sound expert Walter Murch to create the extraordinary scene.

APPROACHES TO SOUND AND APOCALYPSE NOW

The four approaches to sound are realism, stretched realism, hyperrealism, and surrealism. In realism, there is a direct connection between what is happening on screen and what the characters are hearing. For instance, in a restaurant scene, if the director is embracing realism, then the audience will hear dishes clank, distant chatter from other booths, a door opening, silverware, footsteps and so on.

The next approach, stretched realism, takes those realistic sounds and exaggerates them and gives them more personality. Often, this is done so that the audience understands the emotional implications of the sounds. For instance, in the film *Wizard of Oz*, the scenes in Kansas use audio realism. Once Dorothy travels to Oz, all of the sounds are stretched; for example, the clanging of the Tin Man sounds like metal, but in almost a cartoonish sense. The sound effects are childishly over the top because the film was made for a family audience and kids need to relate to the events and locations in a friendly way, even if they are meant to be scared. Fantasy films often work in stretched realism.

In hyperrealism, the audio isn't stretched; rather, it's intensified. For example, in a film about a safe cracker, the sound designer might create a hyperreal moment as if one can hear each pin dropping as the safe is being cracked. This would normally never be heard, but to translate the intensity of the safe cracker's concentration, a hyperreal acoustic representation could be created.

Surrealism is when the film takes the sounds that the character should be hearing and replaces them with ideas that are in the character's subconscious. Surrealism is the intentional excitement of the subconscious mind through the use of irrational juxtaposition. An example occurs in *Apocalypse Now*, when the sound of a helicopter blade is juxtaposed with a ceiling fan.

Apocalypse Now is the story of a man, Captain Willard, who is making his way into Cambodia to assassinate a rogue American colonel named Kurtz. Willard is unhinged when the movie begins. When Willard sees a ceiling fan, he hears helicopters. To reflect his mental state, the audio throughout the film is entirely from Captain Willard's surrealistic point of view. Often, the audio is based in realism, but at times, the surreal qualities sneak in. This surrealist approach places the audience inside Willard's mind.

THE HURT LOCKER

A useful point of comparison to *Apocalypse Now* is another war film: *The Hurt Locker*. This movie tells the story of William James and his explosive disposal team in the midst of the Iraq War in the early 2000s. Director Kathryn Bigelow and her sound team (Paul Ottosson and Ray Beckett) edited the audio in such a way as to create two different audio points of view.

The story is a dichotomy between James and his team (two other soldiers named Sanborn and Eldridge). The team supports James as he diffuses roadside bombs. James seems reckless to them, and they don't understand why he behaves the way that he does. James can't seem to explain it either, but his brash tactics are successful and he keeps his men alive. Only at the end does the audience realize why James does what he does.

The audio breaks down on this dichotomy as well. With Sanborn and Eldridge, Bigelow and her team use realism. The sounds are natural,

with one exception: The movie uses non-diegetic music with Sanborn and Elridge. (Diegetic sound comes from within the film's world. Non-diegetic sound doesn't come from a source within the film—it's added by the storyteller to cue emotions.) As an example of non-diegetic music, if Sanborn and Elridge are feeling scared, then fearful music plays.

The approach with James is very different. The scenes with James don't contain any non-diegetic music. There may be scenes with music in them, but the music is diegetic—it comes from within the scene. For instance, there are scenes with James and heavy metal music, but the music is coming from James's boom box, not from Bigelow as an emotional cue. This stripping of emotional cues means the audience must figure out how to feel about the scenes with James—himself a somewhat emotionless character—on their own.

In James's scenes, Bigelow also replaces realism with hyperrealism. Everything that James does, the audience hears. It's possible to hear every pebble that he flicks away to find the bomb, to hear the detonator cord tighten when he grips it, and to hear his every breath amplified inside of his helmet. Through juxtaposition, Bigelow lets the audience sympathize with Sanborn and Eldridge, yet understand the intensity of James.

When Sanborn and Eldridge's stories end, the audience understands the emotions that each has been through. At the same time, the audience still wonders why James is the way he is until the end of the film. Bigelow waits until the final scene, when the audience hears the non-diegetic music that was meant for James as an emotional cue. The scene marries the hyperintensity of what James is thinking with the music of how he is feeling. The audience finally gets what makes James tick.



Among other accomplishments, sound designer Walter Murch is known for his technique of worldizing. An example of this can be heard in the film *American Graffiti*. Released in 1973, the movie's primary audience was people in their 20s and 30s, looking back on life in the 1950s and 1960s.

In a scene of a high school dance, Murch wanted the audience to hear the music as they'd remember it. Therefore, he took a perfect recording of the scene's music and played it through speakers in an auditorium, complete with 100 extras in attendance. The auditorium's walls bounced the sound around, and the people's bodies muffled it, recreating the music as it would have sounded at a high school dance.

THE GODFATHER

There is a classic scene in *The Godfather* where Michael Corleone (played by Al Pacino) goes to dinner with a corrupt police captain and the man who tried to kill his father. Michael plans to kill these men, using a handgun that (he hopes) has been hidden for him in the bathroom of the restaurant. In essence, the scene has three parts: The

men arrive and order their meal, Michael goes to the bathroom to find the gun, and Michael returns and kills the men.

The film's sound designer was Walter Murch. The audio team creates a specific point of view with the audio to tell the story from Michael's perspective, and then they put the audience inside of Michael's mind at the moment he kills the men.

There is a difference in intensity (or volume) between the bathroom and the restaurant. The bathroom is louder than the restaurant. This difference in volume juxtaposes the two locations, cues the audience that the bathroom is more important, and cues the audience that Michael is more aware. The sound of the subway in the background also plays a role: It's soft and innocuous when the men arrive at the restaurant, but builds in intensity and violence as the scene moves along.

The audience sees Michael find the gun in the bathroom, but then the movie cuts back to the restaurant. When the movie cuts to the bathroom once more, the audience has lost track of the gun, only seeing Michael smooth his hair back with both hands. The sound of the screeching subway train intensifies.

The plan is for Michael to come out of the bathroom, gun blazing. However, he doesn't. He walks back to dinner, and the subway train passes. The audience's excitement dissipates like the passing train.

The other gangster—the man Michael was planning to kill—starts speaking in Italian. There are no subtitles: Michael doesn't understand Italian, and his mind is somewhere else. The droning of the Italian words is lost on the audience, just as it is lost on Michael.

The camera starts to dolly in closer to Michael. A faint rumble begins—a subway train again—and gets louder quickly. Michael leaps up, gun now mysteriously in his hand, and with four shots kills them both. He hurries out of the restaurant.

By using audio to put the audience inside Michael's thoughts, the scene transitioned from realism to hyperrealism. Murch took the sounds of the subway and Italian dialogue and created strong metaphorical meaning as the scene was taking place.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Listen to a Walter Murch movie. Analyze how sound is being used as a central storytelling element. Suggested films include *American Graffiti*, *The Conversation*, *The Godfather*, and *Apocalypse Now*.

Genres explore the use of sound differently. Choose a genre, and then find a handful of different types of directors within that genre. Look for a mix of comedic and dramatic directors, directors from different eras, and who have different approaches to content and storytelling styles. Then, watch these films with a keen ear towards their different approaches to sound design. See if you can find representatives of the four approaches to sound: realism, stretched realism, hyperrealism, and surrealism.



SETTING THE SCENE: MASTERFUL SET DESIGN

This lecture focuses on the details of a filmmaking space, locations, and set design. First, the lecture looks at the extraordinary steps the crew of *Apollo 13* took to ensure historical accuracy. Second, the lecture explores how color and light can be used in set design to create mood and atmosphere that helps tell the story on an archetypal level. The lecture ends with a look at the idea of *mise-en-scène*, which is a French term describing how a film or theater director can symbolically place elements inside the frame (or on the stage) to better communicate with the audience.

APOLLO 13

Directed by Ron Howard, *Apollo 13* tells the story of three NASA astronauts who were left nearly powerless in space after an oxygen tank exploded. Then, for three days, the astronauts and NASA fought to keep the astronauts alive and bring them back home.

To the *Apollo 13* filmmakers, historical accuracy and logistical authenticity was of utmost importance. They knew that a good portion of their audience would remember these events. The details of 1970 and of space exploration were a vital part of telling a captivating story.

Howard suspected that people would pay attention to how gravity was being portrayed in this film. He also knew that, psychologically, the set would have a lot to do with how the actors acted. The traditional approach for filming actors in “space” would have been to build the set in a large studio, suspend the actors from acrobatic wires, and then paint out the wires in post-production.

With that approach, Howard thought that people would inherently feel that the film just wasn't real, so he took the strings away. He made a deal with NASA to use their KC-135 aircraft, meant for reduced-gravity maneuvers. The aircraft can provide about 20 to 25 seconds of weightlessness at a time. Howard convinced NASA to let his team build



a replica of the *Apollo 13* capsule inside of the KC-135 and take them up for a ride 500 times. That's dedication—and probably one of the reasons Howard won an award from the Directors Guild of America.

EMOTION

Some directors work closely with their set designers and cinematographers to create a world where the environment makes the audience feel something that can't be articulated by its characters. One key example of this at work is Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*.

The central location of *The Shining*, the Overlook Hotel, is a character itself. It has memories, and it interacts with the human characters. It has a personality that two characters, father and son, have a chance to explore. The inside is deep red and full of mysterious violence of the past, which is uncovered by the father (Jack) and the son (Danny).

For example, as Jack's thoughts become more violent, he finds his way into a bathroom with an imaginary butler named Grady. The men are dressed in blacks and browns. The fixtures, floor and ceiling are

bright white. Everything else is bright red. This is a violent, visceral place—the perfect mirror of Jack’s feelings towards his family.

Around the same time of *The Shining*’s production, Ridley Scott was directing the film *Blade Runner*, which also uses large, sprawling sets to reflect the internal struggles of its protagonist. *Blade Runner*’s story focuses on Rick Deckard’s struggle with mortality in a dystopian future.

At the hands of a skilled cinematographer—like Jordan Cronenweth, who shot *Blade Runner*—light can become just as much of a character in the film as any of those played by actors. The film features a city. It’s always drizzling and dark, but the city is also bathed in a scummy glow. Billboards glow above the characters, and bright lights from the storefronts glint behind the shuffling crowds.

It’s dirty, clean, overcrowded, sterile, ugly, and beautiful, all at the same time. The same goes for Deckard’s character. He is constantly torn between the dark messiness of human nature and the bright and ordered regimen of technology.

MISE-EN-SCÈNE

Directors, set designers, and prop designers can focus on the details of a location. This is known as mise-en-scène—the symbolic placement of each element in the frame. Kubrick knew the symbolic strength of mise-en-scène in the early 1960s and 1970s—a time when salacious stories in film were difficult to introduce to the American public. Mise-en-scène was a perfect tool to explain to the audience that the protagonist in *A Clockwork Orange* thought of nothing else but sex, violence, and Beethoven.

Beethoven is ever present in the sound design. Violence is too, as it’s written into the script. As far as mise-en-scène is concerned, female nudity and phallic imagery are everywhere. Examples include naked

female mannequins, phallic statues, and the mask the character Alex wears when he attacks a woman in her home. All of these sexual elements establish the mise-en-scène of Alex's twisted mind.

On another level, Kubrick uses this technique to hold a mirror up to our own society. Perhaps Kubrick is also saying that they are a reflection of the modern world; perhaps sexual imagery is pervading our thoughts and actions, too, and those of our children, neighbors, and the strangers on the street. These are the kinds of questions science fiction asks of its audience.



In *Raging Bull*, the boxer Jake is concerned that he has small hands. However, Jake's actor (Robert De Niro) did not have small hands. To get around this, the few times the audience sees Jake's hands up close are when he soaks them in large buckets of ice, shot in a way to make his hands appear small.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

See if a space can speak to you. Find a new movie that you know very little about. Then, watch the first half hour of the film without the sound, using only the set design and the actors' behavior within those locations to tell you what's going on. Then, re-watch the first half hour again, and see how accurate your observations and assumptions were. What aspects of the mise-en-scène provided the most clues?

Find an old movie that you love, and one where you know the character goes through a tremendous change. Before you re-watch the film, and without giving it too much thought, jot down the change that you remember the character going through. Then, as you watch the film, make some notes about other things that change along with the character. For example, pay attention to costumes, props, color, weather, and their physical environments as a reflection of their change.



SPECIAL EFFECTS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

This is the first of two lectures that discuss special effects in film. This one focuses on special effects in the 20th century. Special effects are visual effects, and a visual effect is any sleight of hand that makes the audience believe something is true when it isn't. In broad strokes, there are two types of special effects: practical effects and computer effects. Practical effects exist in the real world; for example, if an actor runs out of a building while a real fire burns behind them, that is a practical effect. Computer effects are those created by a computer—that is, if a computer added the flames to the building the actor flees from. Computer effects are also known as computer-generated imagery (CGI).

EARLY EXAMPLES

The 1925 film *The Lost World* featured early special effects. Director Harry O. Hoyt hired animator Willis O'Brien to use stop-motion animation to create the movie's dinosaurs and then filmed live actors reacting to them. He shot these scenes separately and then spliced them together, using a very primitive form of split screen to put the dinosaurs on one half of the screen and the humans on the other. The effect made it seem that they were interacting in the same scene.

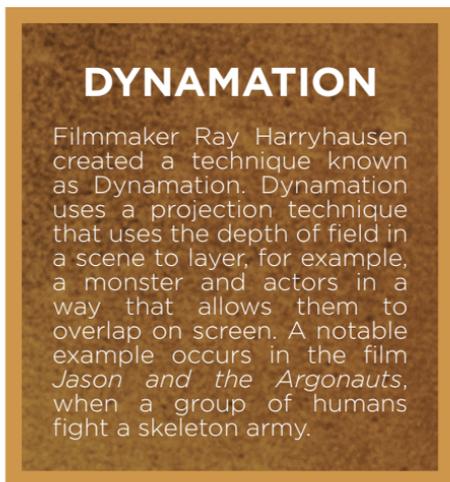
At about the same time, directors like Cecil B. DeMille and Fritz Lang were pushing the limits of special effects in locations. DeMille directed *The Ten Commandments* in 1923 and needed to have Moses part the Red Sea. They shot three separate versions of the same scene. One was the human actors on a blank set. The second was a close-up of water being poured out of two tubs into one big trough. By running the second scene backwards, the water appeared to be parting.

The scene used two slabs of clear gelatinous material. When they shot it at the right angle, it looked like two walls of vibrating water being held in place by some almighty force. When they put those three scenes together by exposing them all at the same time into one

piece of film, the sea parted, the water was held in place, and the Israelites walked safely through.

Meanwhile, in 1927, Fritz Lang released the astounding film *Metropolis*, which is a dystopian vision of urban life created through matte paintings, miniature models, and the use of mirrors to place real actors inside of the models. Another director/producer team hired Willis O'Brien to combine all of these techniques into the classic 1933 film *King Kong*, starring Fey Ray and an 18-inch replica of a giant ape terrorizing New York City.

In essence, these four movies set a standard and approach to special effects that rippled forward more than 30 years. Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* took a page out of DeMille's book, combining live action with practical effects. In 1975, the movie *Jaws* combined live action and an animatronic shark, harkening back to *King Kong* and *The Lost World*. *Blade Runner* (in 1982) followed in Fritz Lang's footsteps, pushing models and painted backgrounds to a new level while recreating a futuristic Los Angeles.



DAVID FINCHER AND *FIGHT CLUB*

David Fincher is a director known more for his attention to realism than his attention to special effects, which is what makes his interest in special effects notable, particularly regarding his 1999 film *Fight Club*. It is a great example of special effects serving the story.

The film is told from a first-person perspective by a character with a very active imagination. He ties many mental threads together. His ramblings work well in the source novel, but presented a challenge in making the film.

Fincher pushed a technique called photogrammetry to its limits. Photogrammetry is a CGI image-modeling technique. It can be used to visualize rooms, populate the rooms with furniture, and then move through the room in a first-person perspective.

In *Fight Club*, Fincher takes the viewer through a room, out the door, down the trash chute, into the parking garage, into the back of a parked van, and into a box, which contains a bomb. All of this occurs in one shot. The audience doesn't think about it when they see it; rather, they're just following the narrator's stream of consciousness. Fincher uses the tool to explain what the unreliable narrator is thinking and how he thinks. The special effects take the audience there seamlessly.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

For a real watershed moment in special effects history, compare Harryhausen's work in *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* and George Lucas's work in the original *Star Wars*. Knowing that they both came out the same year (1977), notice how the work of Lucas was replicated for decades to come, while Harryhausen's approach has practically died off.

Do special effects enhance the movie? You be the judge. Compare and contrast movie remakes or sequels/prequels, as long as one was before and one was after CGI came into full force. Which versions do you like better, and why? Some suggestions: *Batman*,

Ben-Hur, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, The Hobbit, James Bond, The Jungle Book, King Kong, Planet of the Apes, the Star Wars series, and Tron.



SPECIAL EFFECTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

This is the second of two lectures on special effects in film. In a good movie, the purpose of these effects is to keep the audience immersed in the film. In great movies, the special effects enhance the emotional and narrative content of the film (not the other way around). To explore special effects further, this lecture looks at several 21st-century movies as case studies.

GLADIATOR AND THE PERFECT STORM

Ridley Scott directed the 2000 historical action movie *Gladiator*. It won Oscars for Best Picture and Best Visual Effects, among many others. It used CGI and practical effects to substitute extras on the set. There are scenes in the Roman Colosseum with more than 30,000 Romans in the audience. Fewer than 10 percent were actually actors. The rest were CGI or cardboard cutouts, as was two-thirds of the actual Colosseum.

Another notable 2000 film is *The Perfect Storm*. It's about fishermen fighting to survive hurricane conditions in the ocean. The movie required realistic water, which is difficult to animate. To meet the challenge, the company Industrial Light & Magic blended real water with CGI water. The idea is to put a real boat in a real tub of water, and then have the CGI water create artificial waves, drops, and splashes—all of which look seamless.

MOTION CAPTURE AND THE LORD OF THE RINGS

Another important technique is called motion capture. People wear suits with markers that look like ping-pong balls on all of their joints, and they do their acting in front of a computer sensor. The computer reads each of those points and then figures out how to fill in the rest.

That technique uses a computer to record realistic human movement. Then, a digital puppet, or avatar, can be put on top of that recording.

The avatar is fake, but the underlying movement is real. This is the technology used to create Gollum in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. That trilogy won three Oscars for visual effects—one each year for three years.

THE GOLDEN COMPASS, PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN, AND THE AVENGERS

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest (from 2006) and *The Golden Compass* (from 2007) are films that figured out how to get live-action characters to interact with the CGI characters.

The Golden Compass accomplished this in two ways. First, they spent lots of time on the project: It took the effects team more than two years to complete their work. Second, while the actors were acting, director Chris Weitz had stunt people interacting with them to make the human interactions more realistic. Then, later, a CGI character would replace the stunt person.

Pirates of the Caribbean's crew chose a different approach. They partnered with Industrial Light & Magic, who had developed a new technique called Imocap technology. Instead of the computer recording the actors' movements, as with traditional motion capture technology, Imocap works by using data to predict the actors' movements. This was useful for creating the squid-faced character of Davey Jones.

The Avengers took Imocap one step further. Mark Ruffalo plays Bruce Banner, who transforms into the Hulk. An Imocap camera recorded him, and the computer figured out Ruffalo's movements. In the scenes where Bruce Banner turns into the Hulk, the computer replaced Ruffalo with the angry green giant, but when he turns back into Banner, the computer replaced Ruffalo with himself.

THE DIGITAL BACKLOT

A traditional backlot is the part of the studio where the film is shot. Typically, it's the large sets, such as main streets and the fronts of buildings. A digital backlot finds a way to replace entire locations digitally. Two films tried this in 2004—one on the high end and one on the low end.

The low-end feature is called *Able Edwards*, and it was shot for about \$30,000. The reason why it was so cheap is that they didn't have to build any sets or travel. The actors stayed in one place, and they shot the entire film in front of a green screen. Once all the acting was done, the director, Graham Robertson, loaded all the footage onto his laptop and added all the scenery digitally. They made the whole film in less than three weeks.

The bigger-budget feature to try this technique was *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*, with \$70 million. The movie starred Gwyneth Paltrow, Jude Law, and Angelina Jolie.

While the first digital backlot films were failures, they led the way to more successful films. The technique has a certain visual style. The characters are front and center in the frame, with the background more or less a two-dimensional backdrop behind them. It's reminiscent of a comic book. Successful movies to use this technique include *Sin City* and *300*, both adapted from comic books and graphic novels by Frank Miller.

INCEPTION, AVATAR, AND GRAVITY

This section of the lecture looks at three movies notable for their approach to special effects. The first is *Inception*, which stands out because director Christopher Nolan fought so hard against the use of CGI. *Inception* features many events that would be perfect for CGI—a

zero-gravity revolving hotel corridor and a flipping truck, for instance—but Nolan stuck to practical visual effects as much as he could.

In *Avatar*, director James Cameron's team worked with computers so powerful that they could render the Imocap images in real time. When the actors were acting on the set, Cameron and the cinematographer could watch the performance on a monitor and see the alien acting—not the actor in a motion capture suit.

Gravity's team created great digital sets and simulated weightlessness throughout most of the film. However, the movie truly stands out for its use of lighting. The team built a practical lighting system that could take all the information from the CGI world they created and light it. As actor Sandra Bullock floats around in the movie, that system lights her depending on wherever she is in the CGI scene at any given moment.

LIFE OF PI AND ZODIAC

Keep in mind that great special effects make the audience believe that something is true when it really isn't, in a way that keeps the audience fully immersed in the story. The movies *Life of Pi* and *Zodiac* accomplish that goal.

Life of Pi, directed by Ang Lee, tells the story of a boy and a tiger alone on a boat in the ocean. The effects of the ocean and the tiger are extremely easy to believe, and help build a sad, pensive, miraculous story.

David Fincher's *Zodiac* is the story of the Zodiac killings in the 1970s. Fincher used special effects in this film to replace almost every exterior in modern San Francisco with environments from the 1970s. For example, Fincher had a team recreating entire intersections based on photographs from the era.

BLOOD IN ZODIAC

Every drop of blood spilled in *Zodiac* is digital. By adding blood, bullets, and bone fragments through CGI, David Fincher could place every object exactly where he wanted. This also allowed for immediate retakes, which aren't possible when using fake blood packs called squibs to simulate blood.



Fincher wanted the camera shots in these scenes to be handheld, to make the audience feel immersed. He built the intersections inside of a three-dimensional space so that he could recreate the handheld camera movements and match them up with the actual shots of the actors in the scene.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Looking back on the history of special effects, do you think that it was more difficult to create special effects before high-powered computer technology?

Or, do you think it's more difficult now because the expectations are so high?

Do you agree with the video lecture's assessment of the two greatest special-effects films of all time? If not, which are your top two? How do you justify your choices?



**SCORING THE STORY:
MUSIC IN FILM**

This lecture discusses the use of music in films. It begins by examining the difference between diegetic and non-diegetic music, and it considers different directors' reasons for using each approach. Next, the lecture discusses the idea of emotional memory and how film directors can manipulate emotional connections for storytelling purposes. The lecture also discusses musical motifs and leitmotifs, and how and why composers and directors use them to communicate subconsciously with the audience.

DIEGETIC VERSUS NON-DIEGETIC MUSIC

Non-diegetic music cannot be heard by the characters in the movie. It's not part of their world. Non-diegetic music exists solely for the audience's enjoyment and understanding. An example is the iconic shark music from *Jaws*, which instills a feeling of dread.

This is in contrast to another famous recurring thematic song. In the classic film *Casablanca*, the song "As Time Goes By" serves as an emotional trigger for both Rick and Ilsa as they remember their love affair in Paris. The music is diegetic because the piano man, Sam, plays it and the characters can hear it. It's part of their world.

On a basic level, diegetic music is used to create the environment for the story. It can add a sense of time to the location. It can add a sense of energy to the story, and it can provide information about the characters' personalities.

Non-diegetic music, on the other hand is most often used to cue the emotions of the audience. This can be done in small snippets, as Orson Welles introduced in *Citizen Kane*, which uses short musical interludes to guide the audience's emotional attention. They can also be sweeping scores that carry the audience from scene to scene, as in the epic romance *Out of Africa*.

MOTIFS AND LEITMOTIFS

A leitmotif is a piece of music that becomes associated with a specific person, place, idea, or action. That same musical interlude plays whenever that thing reappears in the story. For example, in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, specific iconic notes play whenever the monolith appears to make a shift in the evolution of mankind. The music represents transformation. Every time there's a transformation in humanity's evolution, the music plays, and the monolith appears. The shark music in *Jaws* is also a leitmotif. It represents the shark.

A leitmotif is the same music repeated. Conversely, a motif changes. The melody is the same, but the tempo, instrumentation, musical genre, intensity, or other elements change. For example, take the character Darth Vader from the *Star Wars* series. When he's strong, his theme plays with trumpets and timpani drums. The emotional architecture of the theme is strong, powerful, and threatening. However, when he's weak, the music uses violins and becomes slow and soft, making for different emotional architecture.

A leitmotif accompanies the thing (such as the shark). A motif represents the thing. In fact, a motif can often replace the thing. For example, in *Star Wars*, the motif of Obi-Wan Kenobi plays even after he's physically gone, which lets the audience know he's still with Luke Skywalker.

EMOTIONS

The lecture now turns to three concepts: emotional memory, primary emotions, and secondary emotions. Emotional memory is the connection that an audience member might have to a song. The primary emotion is the emotion that the character in the film is feeling. The secondary emotion is how the director wants the audience to feel. Often, they are in alignment: The protagonist is sad (primary emotion), and the audience is sad (secondary emotion). This

might be emphasized with non-diegetic violins or a sad diegetic song playing on the radio as the protagonist drives home, heartbroken.

Sometimes, the primary and secondary emotions are in conflict. The protagonist feels one way—powerful and alive—but the audience is experiencing something different—perhaps fear or revulsion. Two films that play strongly off of the idea of emotional memory are *Moulin Rouge!* and *Harold and Maude*.

Harold and Maude, for instance, only uses Cat Stevens songs. Cat Stevens, at the time, was at the peak of his career. His albums were skyrocketing to the top of the billboard charts, which perhaps made this quirky film a perfect fit for the times.

Moulin Rouge! uses a wide variety of cover songs of pop hits from the 1980s and 1990s, and transplants them back into a story taking place in the year 1899. Any emotional memory that the audience may have to The Police’s “Roxanne” or Madonna’s “Material Girl” are juxtaposed against a different era and a strange locale. The emotional architecture of the songs is further altered by having them remixed and covered by different musicians.

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN AND OUT OF AFRICA

The Coen brothers’ modern western *No Country for Old Men* is an exciting, brutal ride with a sociopathic killer. It’s notable for this lecture’s purposes because it has no music. There are no cues to tell the audience how to feel, which itself is unnerving.

When it is present, music can add a layer of surrealism, taking the audience into a dream state. An example of this surrealist phenomenon is present in the film *Out of Africa*, as Meryl Streep and Robert Redford’s characters fly in a plane above the savannah of Africa.

The two are falling in love. As they move from the mundane realism of being on the ground to flying above the beautiful African savannah, the music swells, and it carries the audience into surrealistic beauty.

DIRECTOR AND COMPOSER

The relationship between director and composer is an important one. The composer will want to watch at least a rough cut of the film to begin synchronizing the music to the visuals, but ideally, the composer will discuss the story and characters much earlier.

Some directors fall into the trap of using a scratch track. A scratch track is used when a director and editor choose a piece of music as a substitute while they edit. Then, they ask the composer to give the edited piece new music with the feel of the scratch track. This is difficult for the composer and often leads to subpar work.

In sum, ideally, a composer is brought in early and works with the director to develop themes, leitmotifs, and motifs in the score. They figure the emotional architecture and conceptualize both the diegetic and non-diegetic music. They can also lay down their own scratch tracks to be used while the final score is being composed.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Montages are a way that directors tap directly into the dream aspect of the audience. The next time you see a montage occur in a film, pay attention to which song they are using and try to figure out why they are using that particular song.

Look deeper into motifs and leitmotifs. The next time you notice that there is thematic music being used to score a film, start to pay attention to recurring musical motifs and whether or not the director has attached those recurring musical interludes to specific characters.



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**COLOR AND LIGHT:
ELEMENTS OF ATMOSPHERE**

Color and light are the focus of this lecture. The lecture first introduces the general vocabulary of color design and the way in which films such as *Life of Pi* utilize color palettes for their stories. The lecture also talks about the basic uses for light, and then examines how a film like *Blade Runner* uses a variety of lighting techniques to tell a deeper story. It ends by exploring innovative filmmaking techniques from some amazing directors who use both light and color to reimagine the world as we know it.

COLOR VOCABULARY

When discussing color, there are three descriptors to keep in mind: hue, value, and saturation. Hue is the color itself. The seven core hues of a color wheel are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

The value is the lightness or darkness of each hue. For instance, red could be pink or a deep-wine color. Both of those are the same hue (red), but with a different value.

Saturation is the intensity of the color determined with the hue and value. A red hue could have a lighter value, which makes it pink. Saturation determines if it is a neon pink (high saturation) or a pastel pink (low saturation).

CHOOSING A COLOR PALETTE

With the three descriptors of hue, value, and saturation in mind, a director and cinematographer will establish a specific palette for a film. Keep in mind that in a feature film, everything is controlled, such as sets, costumes, and locations. A good director will coordinate all of those to fit the palette.

As an example, the fantasy film *Life of Pi* uses highly saturated colors. It adds to the fantastical nature of the film, which is the survival story

of a boy trapped on a rowboat in the middle of the ocean with a tiger. The tiger is orange, the sunbaked boy is brown, the sea is blue, and the lifeboat is smeared with red blood.

In this palette, there is no green or purple. That is by design: Certainly, the director Ang Lee and cinematographer Claudio Miranda could have made the boat or Pi's clothes a different color instead of bright white, but the bright whites make the other colors pop.

Keep in mind that red and green are on opposite sides of the color wheel from one another, making them complementary colors. Eyes that stare at one color exclusively for any length of time begin to yearn for its complement. That plays in to an important visual move in *Life of Pi*: After more than an hour of staring at oranges, browns, and reds, Pi finally reaches an island, filled with luscious, vibrant green. Lee and Miranda knew that they wanted the green of the island to pop, so they withheld it from the color palette in the first half of the movie.

THE COLOR RED

The color red plays an important symbolic role in many movies. In *Do the Right Thing*, red is used to represent and remind the audience of heat. As that heat rises, so does the anger in the neighborhood. The anger culminates in a small riot, where reds and oranges dominate until the anger and the heat dissipates.

Steven Spielberg and Janusz Kaminski use red in a different way in their stunning film *Schindler's List*. The film is in black and white—all except one little girl, who wears a red coat. It could represent lost innocence in the face of evil, but it's up to the audience to decide.

LIGHT

One of the most striking ways to infuse color into a scene is through the use of light. Cinematographers use light for three reasons, and three reasons only: The first is so that the audience can see. The second is to give shape to the world and those that occupy it. The third is to deliver and enhance story. Filmmakers do this by using light to emphasize emotion, enhance understanding of a character, and to deepen understanding of the film's theme.

Francis Ford Coppola and his cinematographer Vittorio Storaro do all three brilliantly in *Apocalypse Now*. Toward the end of the film, Marlon Brando's character (named Kurtz) has a famous monologue hiding in the depths of the jungle. He's bald, and he's gigantic. He's lit in such a way that the audience can only see his head and hands float in darkness.

The light bathes him and his surroundings half in light and half in darkness. That represents the razor's edge that he walks. He talks about this (with the words that Coppola wrote), but it's also shown in the lights that Storaro uses.

LIGHTING'S CHARACTERISTICS

Lighting has four characteristics outside of color: hardness, intensity, direction, and distance. Hardness can be determined by if the light is direct or if it's diffused by something, such as the leaves of a tree, for example. Intensity is whether the light is dim or bright; a headlight will be more intense than a candle.

Direction is the angle from which the light comes; examples include below (as with a candle under a person's face) and above (as with the sun beating down from above). Distance is how far away the light source is; for example, compare a flashlight in someone's hand to a star twinkling far away.

COLOR AND LIGHT AT WORK

Good directors and cinematographers keep color and light in mind when making decisions. For an example of these ideas at work, check out the Italian noir classic *The Conformist*, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci and shot by Vittorio Storarro.

The Conformist is the story of conforming and resisting political ideologies. Bertolucci and Storarro use color, light, brightness, and shadow to illustrate the emotions of the main character, Marcello, as he struggles with what it means to be normal and what it means to be an individual as society bares down on one's ideals.

Terrence Malick is another director who pushes the boundaries of color and light. As an example, in *Days of Heaven*, cinematographer Nestor Almendros shot a majority of the film's exterior scene during the magic hour—that is, the time shortly after the sun sets, but when there's still light and everything is bathed in a golden hue. This process took such a long time that the Almendros couldn't finish shooting the film, and Haskell Wexler had to be hired as a second cinematographer to shoot the other half of the film.

The Coen brothers also pay a lot of attention to color and light in their films. Roger Deakins has shot many of their movies. Their collaboration *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* used the post-production tool of digital grading to give the footage a dusty, aged look.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Check out the website *Movies in Color*: www.moviesincolor.com. While you are there, choose a few movies that you've never seen before and spend some time inspecting their color palette.

Based on the colors in the film's palette, make a prediction about the emotions and/or the themes that you would associate with those particular colors. Then see the movie and observe whether or not the emotions and/or themes are present.

Look up some great award-winning cinematographers and then make a short list of the films these cinematographers have worked on. Watch a collection of these movies (three to five movies should do). Watch each film twice: once for story and once to see how color and light are used to shape the story.



**KNOWING CHARACTERS
FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

This lecture explores the internal complexity of a character. Great filmmakers illustrate a multilayered character by using masks in a way that lets the audience really understand where they are coming from. The lecture explores masks using a character from *The Imitation Game*. Then, the lecture turns to character motivations, using *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* as a case study.

MASKS

Movie characters, just like real people, have at least three masks that they wear throughout the day: a public mask, a personal mask, and a private mask. The public mask is what most people see—that is, how a character behaves at work, school, or out in the community. For example, in public, an athlete might put on a good, cheery face for his fans.

When certain characters are in a more intimate setting, such as with close friends or a lover, then the public mask leaves. In these situations, these characters wear a more personal mask; for example, the athlete might tell his girlfriend he has no confidence in his team.

The private mask is even more intimate. The audience only sees the private mask when the character is alone, and it shows the character's true self. The private mask of the athlete might show him trying to read a playbook alone, failing, and crying hysterically. He can't learn the plays, and he's scared. The private mask is the one the audience trusts the most.

MASKS: THE IMITATION GAME

A good example of masks at work comes from *The Imitation Game*, a film about Alan Turing, a World War II British cryptographer who helped crack the central Nazi code and win the war. On the surface, in public, Turing seems arrogant and rude. He has a short temper with anyone who can't keep up intellectually.

He's also smitten by Joan Clarke, one of his cryptographer recruits. When he is together with Joan, he shows his personal side. He is caring, but also awkward and a bit guarded. This juxtaposition—arrogant on the outside, caring and awkward on the inside—endears the audience to Turing and makes the audience want to know more about him.

The audience also sees Turing in private, in the form of flashbacks. In these private moments, the audience learns that Turing was deeply scarred as a young boy when the love of his life—another young man—died suddenly. In these private moments, the audience learns Turing is an injured soul and why he chooses not to make friends very easily.

MOTIVATION: ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST

Motivation provides cohesion to character complexity. Simply put, the guiding principal behind every great character is the character's motivation. It's the essence of the character, and comes from two key distinguishing questions: What does a character want, and what is the character willing to do to get what they want?

For a case study on character motivation, this lecture turns to *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. The film is a battle between an inmate in a mental institution, Randle McMurphy, and Nurse Ratched. McMurphy wants to outsmart the rule makers, and he's willing to fake insanity to get out of a work detail, steal a boat to take his friends fishing, and pantomime watching the World Series just to irritate Nurse Ratched, who won't let him watch the game on TV.

Ratched has her own motivation: She wants to enforce order at all costs. She's willing to psychologically manipulate the men in the ward against each other. She's willing to use medication to pacify the patients. She's willing to restrict patient access to television and cigarettes to enforce her strict sense of order. In fact, she browbeats anyone who stands up to her with the threat of therapeutic

ALAN TURING'S MOTIVATION

In *The Imitation Game*, Alan Turing's motivation is much more complex than simply wanting to crack the Nazi code. This course's view is that he wants the privacy to pursue his own ambitions. For example, he is rude to other cryptographers because he wants to do things his own way. He also proposes to Joan Clarke despite being homosexual as a way to lie about his sexual preferences: Homosexuality was illegal in Britain at the time.

punishments. The crux of the story lies in the tension between protagonist (McMurphy) and antagonist (Nurse Ratched).

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Find a tearjerker movie and see if the writer and director used all three character masks to make the audience cry. Here are three choices, but feel free to find some of your own: *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *The Color Purple*, and *A Walk to Remember*.

Explore the internal aspects of the central character by trying to predict their motivation. For this test, watch a new movie, and at the end of the first act, try to predict what the hero's motivation is. By the end of the movie, see if you were right. Then, see if you can figure out when the filmmakers revealed this information to the audience and why they revealed it at that specific point in the story.



KNOWING CHARACTERS FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

This lecture focuses on the relationship between character and dialogue, and what the audience can learn from examining these words. It starts by examining how dialogue can inform the audience of a character's education, upbringing, intelligence, beliefs, and so forth. Then, it looks more closely at the various reasons and ways that dialogue can be used in a film. Films starring Morgan Freeman will serve as case studies throughout.

INTELLIGENCE AND POWER: *LEAN ON ME*

The first piece of dialogue this lecture will explore is from *Lean on Me*. In it, Morgan Freeman plays Joe Clark, a principal hired to take over an inner-city high school. One of his first conversations is a speech that he makes to the teachers working for him. Certain phrases from his speech jump out, notably, "I want precision," "Discipline is not the enemy of enthusiasm," and "My word is law."

A character who speaks like this is an organized man in charge. He is also intelligent, shown by his ability to design his own phrases: "Discipline is not the enemy of enthusiasm" is a complex, thoughtful phrase. He's also down to earth: He wants "precision," not something less concrete like exactitude or punctiliousness.

In the speech, he also promotes and demotes people. He wants to reclaim the high school, and his approach feels military-like and well ordered.

These words apparently influenced the director as well. In this scene, John Avildsen (the director) placed Morgan Freeman's character in the only white suit in the room, giving the audience a sense of goodness and purity from the outset. Freeman also refers to the security guard as his "avenging angel" and demands that cages be taken down, so the children wouldn't be treated as animals. These words give a sense of goodness, even though the exterior element of this character is angry.

THE PURPOSES OF DIALOGUE

Dialogue serves three primary purposes: to create emotion in the present, to describe backstory from the past, and to move the story forward into the future.

Dialogue's first purpose—to create emotion in the present moment—is part of the story. There are primary emotions (what the characters feel) and secondary emotions (what the audience feels). Often, they are synchronized, but they can also diverge.

Dialogue in the past is how characters describe backstory that the audience never experienced, although the characters did. This is a very common use for dialogue; it's simply didactic explanation.

The third purpose for dialogue—moving the story into the future—is the most dynamic. Good dialogue has to suggest actions that move the story forward into the future. For example, in *Million Dollar Baby*, Scrap says to Frankie about Maggie, “If she dies today ...” Those are important words in the scene: The audience wants to know if Maggie is going to live or die, and so do Frank and Maggie.

INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR FACTORS: *THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION*

Two elements of dialogue for the writer, director, and actor to balance are interior factors and exterior factors. To examine these, the lecture turns to *The Shawshank Redemption*. In an important scene, Morgan Freeman plays an aging convict named Red who is up for parole after having it denied multiple times before. That is what is going on in the exterior level.

On the interior level, the writer and the actor are crafting a message through the use of words and phrases. The scene starts with a man

from the parole board asking, “Your file says you’ve served 40 years of a life sentence. You feel you’ve been rehabilitated?”

Red’s response focuses heavily on the idea of time. He refers to the man from the parole board as “Sonny,” reflecting their difference in age. He uses the phrases “Not a day goes by I don’t feel regret” and “I look back on the way I was,” both of which show a man reflecting on 40 years in prison.

It’s also notable that Red doesn’t use big words; he is uneducated and has been in prison for most of his life. The biggest word he uses is “rehabilitated,” and that was given to him at the start of the interview. He also calls himself “young” and “stupid” when looking back on his early life. All in all, this dialogue’s interior factor is all about the metaphorical idea of time and of a person looking back on his life.

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUE

It can be helpful for screenwriters to ask the following questions when writing dialogue:

- 1 What do characters talk about? What don’t they talk about?
- 2 How do they say what they say? Why do they say it that way?
- 3 What do they allude to in order to avoid what they really want to say?
- 4 What do they hope for in the future?

CHANGE AND CHARACTERS

Typically, the central characters of a story move through a character arc. That change is what a story is all about. Good dialogue both defines a character and illustrates to the audience the change that a character goes through.

Characters do not exist in a vacuum. No matter how interesting a single character is, their story only grows through relationships, both good and bad. Characters are defined by what they say and what do they do. Films are not novels, where the author can provide interesting asides and interior monologues.

In a film, everything is based upon two things: what the audience can see and what the audience can hear. The screenwriter writes with only those two things in mind. That is part of why each word of dialogue is so important.

It is the screenwriter's job to develop fascinating characters through action and dialogue. It is the actor's job to embody those characteristics and make them real. Finally, on the set, it is the director's job to illustrate these characters and capture them on film. When all three jobs are performed in synchronicity, the result is memorable.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Find a screenplay online (try to find a script, not a transcript). Choose one for a film that you haven't seen before. First, read the script as if you're an actor considering a role. Think through the word choice and sentence structure to find out who you think the character really is. Then go see the film. See how close your expectations are to how the actor actually played to role.

Now find another screenplay online. This time, go and see the film first (or choose a script for a film you already know and love). Think about how much you naturally intuit about the characters from their words and actions. Then, read the screenplay. Notice how the screenwriter only describes what can be seen or heard. Make note of the dialogue that informed you about the past, the present, and the future.



SECONDARY CHARACTERS AND SUPPORTING ACTORS

This lecture looks at three specific films: *The Godfather*, *Thelma and Louise*, and *Barton Fink*. The lecture explores how these films use secondary characters to influence the audience's opinion of the protagonist and how they each serve as a small life lesson for the audience.

THE GODFATHER: EXPLORING TRAITS

In *The Godfather*, mafia leader Vito Corleone has four sons: Sonny; Michael; their adopted brother, Tom; and Fredo. The story truly is about Michael, who is supposedly the weakest of the sons—or at least the most pure. He goes off to college and World War II, and is separated from the family business of crime.

Each of the non-Fredo sons represents human attributes. Sonny is hot, passionate, and fiery. Tom is logical and orderly. Michael is quiet and innocent, which comes off as weakness in the world of gangsters.

Eventually, Vito gets shot down in the street and goes on life support, which brings up the question: Which son will succeed him to power? Each of the sons tries to assume power in their own way. Tom tries to broker a deal between the Corleones and their aggressors, made up of rival criminals, but that doesn't work. Michael tries to protect his father in the hospital, but is immediately beaten up. Sonny takes an aggressive stance, but that doesn't work, either.

There comes a pivotal scene in which the three sons meet to decide on a course of action. Sonny pushes for war, but comes off as too aggressive. Tom suggests a truce-minded compromise, but working with the man who tried to kill their father seems unacceptable.

Michael—the least likely son to be the new leader—eventually speaks up. He suggests a blend of the other brothers' ideas: Michael will meet with the rival leaders—seemingly to negotiate—and then kill them. It's a plan everyone can support.

The idea is not that Michael came up with a completely different approach. The others weren't wrong; they were just incomplete. The message that this delivers to the audience is that a good leader thinks with both his head and his heart.

The secondary characters reflect certain attributes that the hero has to incorporate into his or her character. In *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy is not successful until she combines her ideas with her passion and her courage, just as Michael is not successful until he combines the attributes of Sonny and Tom. This is one way to use secondary characters: to make the hero whole.

THELMA AND LOUISE: EXPLORING IDEAS

Secondary characters can also represent different aspects of one idea. An example comes from the film *Thelma and Louise*, which explores misogynistic attitudes and the degrading treatment of women in the 1980s. It was written by Callie Khouri and directed by Ridley Scott.

The story is a modern-day western about two characters hitting the open road. It features dual protagonists. Louise—played by Susan Sarandon—is single, mature, and seemingly level headed. Thelma—played by Geena Davis—is married, immature, and playful, looking for fun and adventure.

At the beginning, Louise is the more active character, while Thelma is reactive. Louise drives the car and makes the plans. However, by the end of the film, they pick up some of each other's traits.

Khouri and Scott decided to tell the story as a road movie, meaning that this dual-protagonist pair would travel along meeting a variety of different characters. They meet at least half a dozen central, secondary characters. All of them are men, and all of them represent a different aspect of misogyny and female degradation. Collectively, they are the antagonists of the movie.

STEREOTYPING VERSUS CHARACTER TYPES

In film, there is a difference between stereotyping and using character types. Stereotyping is painting all members of a certain class with a broad brush, such as: All men treat women as sex objects.

A character type is simply shorthand for a storyteller, an example being an abusive father. If every father in a film is abusive, that is stereotyping. However, if a film uses a broad variety of character types, it is not stereotyping.

BARTON FINK: THE METAPHORICAL LEVEL

The third way that secondary characters can be used to reflect the protagonist's personality is on a completely metaphorical level—that is, when the entire movie is a metaphor for the human condition. As an example, this lecture uses the 1991 Coen brothers film *Barton Fink*, which is the story of a playwright.

Secondary characters metaphorically embody the protagonist's aspirations, thoughts, dreams, failures, and fears. The playwright, Barton Fink, gets whisked off to Hollywood in 1941 after the success of his first Broadway show. He stays alone in a strange, oddly empty hotel. He has been assigned to write a wrestling movie. Then, a character appears in the hotel. The character is a big man who knows how to wrestle and fight people.

One read of the movie is that Fink is struggling to write, and the hotel slowly becomes populated with characters that represent the struggles inside his head. For example, the bellhop asks how long Fink will be staying at the hotel (i.e., struggling to write). Other factors writers can struggle with include fear of failure, alcohol abuse,

and the temptation of wealth. The characters that come to populate the hotel are manifestations of struggles like those. It's a way for the audience to see what's going on inside Fink's head.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Choose a film where the protagonist is surrounded by the same group of characters throughout most of the film. Watch the film twice. On the first viewing, try to identify the hero's internal arc throughout the story. On the second viewing, determine whether or not the characters that surround the hero are a reflection of the hero's change and/or pieces of the puzzle that the hero needed to put together.

Immerse yourself in the work of a character actor. Choose five movies that all utilize the same character actor as a secondary character. Examples of great character actors include: Kathy Bates, John Cazale, Benicio Del Toro, Paul Giamatti, Karl Malden, C. C. H. Pounder, Forest Whitaker, Alfre Woodard, and Jeffrey Wright. Take a long weekend and watch a handful of films where these characters appear. Notice whether they play active or reactive characters. Notice how they play off of the lead actors, and try to figure out how they changed their approach from one film to the next.



STAR POWER: LEAD ACTORS AND THEIR ROLES

This lecture looks at several aspects of acting. It begins by discussing how directors and producers can use an actor's fame on a meta level to tell stories. Then, it compares lead actors to character actors. The lecture ends with an exploration of the actor's relationship with the production, focusing on primary and secondary emotions.

PSYCHO: AUDIENCE EXPECTATIONS

Directors can use an audience's expectations of certain actors to enhance their stories. An example of this at work comes from Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*.

When Hitchcock made *Psycho* in the late 1950s, he knew that actor Janet Leigh was a household name. Anyone who came to see the movie would know that an actor with Janet Leigh's star power would be a major part of the story throughout the entire film.

However, Hitchcock had her character killed in the first act at the hands of an actor no one had ever heard of: Anthony Perkins. Hitchcock knew what the audience expected when it came to star actors, and he subverted their expectations.

ROUNDERS AND BOYS DON'T CRY: LEAD ACTORS

Famous, lead actors can do a lot when it comes to box-office sales, but the majority of them aren't in the business to sell tickets. They're in the business to act, and they use different tools to complete the job.

Rounders is a poker movie starring Matt Damon, Edward Norton, and John Malkovich as professional poker players. To play their roles convincingly, they needed to know how to hold their cards, how they carry themselves, and details as small as where to put their drinks and cigarettes so as to not interrupt the action.

Another tool, method acting, is when great actors entirely become their characters. For example, Daniel Day Lewis embodied the character of Abraham Lincoln for the film *Lincoln*. Robert De Niro gained and lost weight for *Raging Bull*.

When Hilary Swank played a transgender man in the movie *Boys Don't Cry*, she completely immersed herself in the character. She lost weight to give her face a more chiseled look, flattened her chest with bandages, and tucked socks inside her pants to help her understand what the character Brandon Teena would be going through. She also behaved like a transgender man, both on and off camera. It worked: She won an Academy award for her performance.

Not every lead actor uses the approach of method acting, however. Al Pacino is an example of a leading man who has played many different roles, but most often is still unmistakably Al Pacino. His approach, too, has earned many awards.

THE TRIPLE CROWN

The so-called triple crown of acting is when a single actor wins a Tony (for theater), an Oscar (for film), and an Emmy (for television) within their lifetime. As of publication, 23 actors have achieved this. Viola Davis was the 23rd, and Al Pacino was the 16th.



GENE HACKMAN: CHARACTER ACTING

Good character actors blend in and change shape. As an example, this lecture turns to the work of Gene Hackman. He plays Clyde Barrow's dim-witted brother in *Bonnie and Clyde*. He is also the cunning Lex Luthor in *Superman*, a nefarious father in *The Royal Tenenbaums*, an iron-fisted sheriff in *Unforgiven*, and a conservative congressman in *The Birdcage*.

Even when he's in a lead role, Hackman seems to make the movie an ensemble. Examples include *The Conversation*, *Bat*21*, *The French Connection*, *Hoosiers*, and *Mississippi Burning*. In each film, Hackman's character is at the center of something bigger.

To zoom in on one example, *The Conversation* stars Gene Hackman as a surveillance expert. Hackman may be the lead, but the recording Hackman makes, the mystery it involves, and the people whose lives it destroys take center stage.

FENCES: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EMOTIONS

To close, this lecture turns to the movie *Fences* and its approach to primary emotions (what the characters feel) and secondary emotions (what the audience feels). *Fences* is mostly two people—played by Denzel Washington and Viola Davis—standing in the back yard, hashing out their lives.

In *Fences*, Washington's character, Troy, is a garbage man who once had the talent to play in the major leagues—except it was the 1940s, and black players weren't allowed in majors. They played exclusively in what was called the Negro leagues. This is a bitter memory for Troy, and the audience feels it, putting the primary and secondary emotions in sync.

However, a split between the primary and secondary emotions occurs when Troy's son Cory believes he's on the way to the NFL to play professional football. The audience is happy for him, but Troy is angry. This is startling and confusing, which is good from a storytelling point of view: The audience is engaged and trying to make sense of the scenario.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Immerse yourself in the work of a lead actor. Choose five movies that all star the same actor, for instance, Meryl Streep in *Sophie's Choice*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Silkwood*, *Out of Africa*, and *The Iron Lady*. Over the course of a week or a month, watch all five of the films. Compare the idiosyncratic differences between the performances. See if you can find the choices that the actor made to differentiate the characters from each other.

Find a great movie that you're already familiar with (preferably one with a lot of emotional twists and turns). Now watch it again, but this time keep track of the primary and secondary emotions as you watch the film. Typically they will be synchronized, but take notice of where that alignment separates. When you notice this separation, try to figure out why the director juxtaposed the primary and secondary emotions against each other.



21

**CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS
AND AUDIENCE EMPATHY**

This lecture explores character relationships. In particular, the lecture looks at how character relations are established, why they work, and how filmmakers use them to craft memorable films. Specifically, the lecture focuses on two harrowing films with strong female protagonists: *The Piano*, written and directed by Jane Campion, and *Precious*, adapted for the screen by Geoffrey Fletcher and directed by Lee Daniels.

CHARACTER SHORTHAND

Audiences have internal, subconscious expectations about how certain character pairs interact and relate to each other. These are known as archetypal pairings. Examples of such pairs include husband and wife, mother and daughter, and prison guard and inmate. Because storytellers don't have to spend time explaining what these pairs mean, they can get into the story—and what makes a particular pair in the story unique—more quickly.



THE PIANO: CHARACTER RELATIONS

The 1993 film *The Piano* features a mute protagonist named Ada, played by Holly Hunter. She has been sold into marriage in the mid-1800s. She and her daughter, Flora, are delivered to New Zealand to start their new life with a man that Ada does not love. A piano—which is the only way Ada speaks—comes with them.

This situation introduces several archetypal pairings: mother and daughter, husband and wife (who have never met), and daughter and stepfather. Ada doesn't need to speak because the audience understands the character relationships. The audience understands the fear of a new world and the instinct of protection. The music serves as a guide, keeping the audience on course.

OBJECTIVES AND INTENTIONS

Another level of character building comes from objectives and intentions. An objective is something that a character is trying to achieve. For instance, in a war movie, a soldier may be trying to stay alive.

An intention is the driving force behind the objective. For instance, the soldier might want to stay alive because his wife had a baby just before the soldier's deployment. Another soldier might also have the objective of staying alive with the intention of smuggling gold out of the war zone. The differences can manipulate the way that the audience will identify with each character.

It is the screenwriter's job to develop conflicting characters by comparing and contrasting their objectives and intentions. It is then the director's job to visually illustrate these similarities and differences, and the actor's job to embody them. When all three jobs are performed in synchronicity, the result is memorable.

PRECIOUS: BREAKING EXPECTATIONS

The movie *Precious* tells a story that is nearly devoid of men. Those that play a role, with the exception of one, break sharply from our expectations. *Precious* is the story of a 16-year old girl named Precious, the relationship she has with her mother, and Precious's two children. The archetypal character relations in play are mother and daughter, mother and son, and grandmother and grandchild; however, in this movie, audience expectations get turned on their head.

To begin with, the teenager's children were a result of Precious being raped by her father, with her mother's knowledge. This thrusts the audience into a juxtaposition of expectations: Precious and her love for her children are juxtaposed against the unspeakable actions between Precious and her own parents. To make matters worse, Precious's mother, Mary, blames and hates Precious for the sexual abuse.

PRECIOUS: OBJECTIVES AND INTENTIONS

The movie also exemplifies objectives and intentions. Precious and Mary both want custody of Mongo and Abdul (Precious's children). In this way, Mary and Precious both have the same objective. Their intentions couldn't be more different. Precious loves her children and wants to give them a better life, but Mary wants custody of her grandchildren so that she can continue to collect welfare checks. Mary hates the children and only pretends to be their guardian when the welfare workers come by.

Mary is an incredibly complex character, portrayed by Monique Hicks. For her work, she won the Best Supporting Actress award at both the Oscars and the Screen Actors Guild Awards.

This course's interpretation of the character is that Mary's motivation is wanting to be a real woman. In her mind, a real woman is in charge of the house. She commands respect. She also brings in the money. Put

another way, she wants custody of the children (her objective) to get money (her intention) in order to feel like a woman (her motivation).

Then, she wants to pawn the kids off on her own mother (her objective) to protect them from herself (her intention). Real women protect their kin, and she wants to feel like a woman (her motivation). Her behavior is abhorrent, but it's justified in Mary's mind.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Pick three of your favorite genres. Then, choose a few archetypes (mentor, hero, shape shifter, trickster, and so on). These archetypes exist in all genres, but they take on different character attributes depending on the genre. The hero might be a sheriff in a western, but a pitcher or a coach in a sports movie. Decide how the archetypes that you chose align with the three genres you picked. Then, go and see a great movie in one of those genres to see how closely your predictions hit their mark.

According to the lecture, character relationships are based on one of two things: characters with similar objectives, but with different intentions, or characters with different objectives, but with similar intentions. To test this hypothesis, find a great movie with a wide variety of characters. Ensemble movies would be great for this test. Watch the movie and take note of the central character's objectives and intentions throughout the story. Compare and contrast them with the objectives and intentions from the other characters.



22

**PATHWAYS TO GREAT
ANTAGONISTS**

This lecture focuses on the role of antagonists in movies. It starts by examining how a great villain is created and their role in a story. Then, the lecture looks at different pathways for telling a story and the role of villains in each.

PROTAGONISTS AND ANTAGONISTS

The purpose of an antagonist is to block the protagonist. That means an interesting protagonist is the key to creating an interesting antagonist. For example, in *Star Wars*, the audience certainly roots against the villain Darth Vader—but only because they're rooting for the heroes, Luke and Leia.

To properly threaten the hero, a good villain needs to be equal to, if not stronger than, the hero. Otherwise, they are not much of a threat. For example, in *The Silence of the Lambs*, Hannibal Lecter is the most feared serial killer in captivity.

A great villain also needs to be a distorted reflection of the hero. An example of this is the relationship between the Wicked Witch (the villain) and Dorothy (the hero) in *The Wizard of Oz*. Dorothy wants to go home, and she needs the ruby slippers to do that. The Wicked Witch also wants the slippers.

Moreover, the Wicked Witch's prized possession is her broom—but in the second half of the movie, Dorothy wants the broom as well. They want the items for different reasons, but the two characters are opposite sides of the same coin.

Because they share identical objectives, the villain serves as a mirror image of the hero, reflecting their weaknesses and challenging them to change. The more that the audience sympathizes with the hero, the more the audience resents these challenges. The stronger the villain, the stronger the resentment—and the better the villain for it.

THEMES AND VILLAINS

The dichotomy between protagonist and antagonist actively generates the theme of a film. Examples of films and their accompanying themes are:

Star Wars: The battle between good and evil

Rocky: Hard work pays off

The Wizard of Oz: Inner strength and believing in oneself

The Silence of the Lambs: Confronting one's inner fears



SUBVERTING EXPECTATIONS

This part of the lecture discusses different methods of creating a compelling villain. The first is the hero's journey. Many, if not most, stories tend to follow this form. For a refresher, refer to Lecture 2. In the hero's journey format, similar objectives force the antagonist and

protagonist into conflict, which builds to a climax and allows for a heroic victor.

However, there are other pathways into a story, involving four different thematic groupings. The first group consists of pathways with multiple protagonists. Instead of following one hero, the audience follows at least two. These are often buddy movies. An example of a buddy film comes from Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones in *Men in Black*. The central story isn't centered on a villain. The story might have a villain, but in *Men in Black*, the story is about Agent J and Agent K learning to get along with each other. Cousins of buddy films include movies about reunions, movies where a character needs to round up a team of experts, and movies where a team is falling apart.

The second group of pathways can best be described as subverted journeys. They don't follow the typical hero's journey where the hero leaves, has an adventure, and returns victorious. The two subverted-journey pathways are road movies and chase movies. For a road-movie example, in *Apocalypse Now*, Captain Willard goes off on a mission and seemingly succeeds, but never returns. In a chase movie, the protagonist is permanently chased out of their natural, starting environment.

The third group of pathways is the defeated-underdog stories. Here, the hero doesn't win or return victorious. Often, simply surviving is enough, but even that is not a certainty. Noir films and melodramas frequently fall under this heading, as are stories where the protagonist seems to succeed but falls back by the end. (See *Raging Bull* for an example of a character rising, attaining success, and then falling again.)

The final collection involves amorphous antagonists. The antagonist isn't a human villain that's out to get out hero. The amorphous-antagonist pathway includes stories where the protagonist battles



nature, technology, society, or himself or herself. Below are examples of each:

- ★ Nature as antagonist: *The Birds*, which utilizes a swarm of animals as an antagonistic force.
- ★ Technology as antagonist: *Blade Runner*, in which the technology is personified.
- ★ Society as antagonist: *Malcolm X*, in which Malcolm Little first battles drug addiction and a criminal mindset before realizing that a racist social system is the real enemy.
- ★ Self as antagonist: *A Beautiful Mind*, in which economist John Nash battles schizophrenia instead of Russian spies.

All of these different pathways diverge thematically from stories created by the hero's journey. They may divvy the audience's attention with multiple protagonists and/or eliminate or replace antagonists played by actors.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Do you believe that a great villain needs to be a distorted reflection of the hero? Before you answer that, see if the idea holds water. Think of your three favorite film villains, and then consider the relationship between those villains and the heroes they torment. Are there psychological, emotional, and intellectual parallels? Once you've thought that through, ask yourself again: Do you believe that a great villain needs to be a distorted reflection of the hero?

Go out and choose a great film you haven't seen before. As you watch, see if you can root out these two elements: What sort of pathway is the filmmaker using to tell this story? Is there a thematic purpose for using this pathway?



POINT OF VIEW IN SCRIPT AND ON SCREEN

This lecture discusses the point of view (POV) of a screenplay. From a screenwriter’s perspective, POV is a decision tree with three central questions. This lecture walks through each of those questions and looks at some examples of POV at work along the way.

Point of View Matrix

Limited	Primary	Objective
Omniscient	Secondary	Subjective

QUESTION 1: LIMITED OR OMNISCIENT POV?

One question a screenwriter must ask is this: Is the audience limited in what they can see, or are they omniscient? In a limited point of view, the storyteller limits the information that the audience has to what a specific character knows. For example, in a limited POV, the audience might follow only the character of a chef as she works to prepare an important meal in an elegant restaurant. Problems she encounters—such as a customer repeatedly sending back a dish—are seen only from her viewpoint.

An omniscient POV is not limited by one person’s physical proximity. The storyteller is able to strategically reveal the actions of any character, regardless of what one particular character knows. Most films employ an omniscient POV, including the family crime story *American Beauty*, where the audience is invited into the lives of half

a dozen characters in order to better understand exactly why Lester Burnham winds up dead by the end of the movie.

The omniscient POV shouldn't be confused with a similar approach to storytelling called headhopping. In headhopping, the POV shifts from one character to the next. An example of headhopping occurs in *MASH*, which jumps around the lives of half a dozen different characters living and working in an army hospital unit. The movie is more of an anthology of short stories, rather than a unified tale. It is a variety of individual stories, each told with a limited POV.

Typically, headhopping demonstrates that there are multiple perspectives to one event, location, or moment in time. This is different from a filmmaker's omniscient POV being used to provide the audience with a well-rounded, objective perspective.

QUESTION 2: PRIMARY OR SECONDARY POV?

The second question is a matter of perspective: Is the story told from the protagonist's point of view (the primary perspective), or is the story told from a secondary character's perspective?

The primary POV tends to place the audience in the middle of the action. In the crime thriller *Midnight Express*, the audience experiences a prison break from the primary POV of Billy Hayes. Even though Billy has three companions in prison, as well as a few antagonists, screenwriter Oliver Stone kept the scenes specific to Billy.

A secondary POV takes a step back from the protagonist, observing from a distance. In another escape movie, *The Shawshank Redemption*, the story is told not from the protagonist's POV, but from the POV of a man who has already been in the prison for decades: a man named Red.

The movie is based on a novella by Stephen King, and the secondary POV allowed him to accomplish two things. First, he could withhold and reveal information without slowing down the story by having to watch the protagonist, Andy Dufresne, learn things. Because Red is a longtime prison inmate, he can provide backstory the protagonist might otherwise take years to learn.

POINT OF VIEW AT WORK

Filmmakers have several combinations to choose from when it comes to selecting a POV. Below are some notable examples of POV at work (though note that other approaches are out there).

- 1** The most popular is to tell the story through an objective, omniscient lens centered on the primary POV of the protagonist.
- 2** Sometimes, a subjective POV will make its way into an omniscient filmmaker's story, as occurs in *A Beautiful Mind*.
- 3** A primary, limited, subjective POV is present in such films as *Annie Hall* and *A Clockwork Orange*.
- 4** In the French film *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, the audience is placed inside the mind of a man who can no longer move, but can hear and see. This POV is primary, limited, and objective.
- 5** *No Country for Old Men* uses a truly unique approach. The movie jumps around between three characters during a chase. It forms a limited, omniscient POV from the perspective of Sheriff Bell as he uses his imagination to recall a case.

Second, King was able to hide information from the audience. The whole story hinges on a big reveal in the third act, which shows the audience something that Dufresne is well aware of. If the story had been from his POV the whole time, the reveal would have been impossible.

QUESTION 3: OBJECTIVE OR SUBJECTIVE POV?

The final question in determining POV is whether or not the story is being told objectively. Is this a straight telling of events as they happened (even if the story is fiction), or is there a subjective element to how this story is being told?

An objective POV presumes that there is a universal truth and that the movie is being told from within that truth. A subjective POV would leave more room for interpretation of the filmmaker's sense of "truth" when it comes to story.

As an example of an objective POV, take the biopic thriller *The Insider*, in which the facts of the story are never in question. The audience may not know what will happen next, but they are certain that the events did happen, that the characters are true to their word, and that the filmmaker is not manipulating the reality of the situation.

A subjective POV, on the other hand, brings the reality of the story into question. For example, halfway through *A Beautiful Mind*, the audience realizes that the main character is schizophrenic. In just two scenes, the entire reality of the film is flipped on its head. Truth is no longer objective. Characters may or may not be real, and conversations may or may not have happened.

Subjective points of view can be skewed, changing, prejudiced, propaganda, misinformed, or just an outright lie. These factors leave the audience to figure out the truth. For instance, in Christopher Nolan's film *Memento*, the filmmaker intentionally mixes objective and subjective POVs to comment on the subjectivity of human memories.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Find a film that has been adapted from a short story (a novel will work too, but the assignment will take longer). Watch the film and read the source material. How do the points of view compare? Did the filmmaker change the point of view during the adaptation process? If so, why? If not, then why not?

Watch *No Country for Old Men* and see if this lecture's interpretation of the film's point of view makes sense. (The lecture posits that it is a secondary, limited, omniscient point of view.) If you don't agree with the observation, then how do you explain the mysterious scene in the motel room with Anton Chigurh hiding behind the door only to disappear a moment later?



**FILMMAKER'S VOICE
AND AUDIENCE CHOICE**

This lecture discusses the filmmaker's voice, which defines how the story is told. It starts by breaking down the most ubiquitous form of the filmmaker's voice into its central parts. The lecture also discusses variations from that voice as well as audiences and their expectations.

THE TRADITIONAL VOICE

The traditional filmmaking voice within the United States is widely recognizable. A traditional film is crafted with a voice that tells a linear narrative using modern filmmaking techniques, told to a broad audience with live-action, human characters that speak their dialogue as oblivious participants in the story. The list of movies with this voice is nearly endless, but examples include *Apollo 13*, *Hoosiers*, and *Escape from Alcatraz*. Below is a breakdown of the voice's components (in bold).

1. A traditional film is crafted with a voice that tells a **linear narrative**—that is, the story starts at the beginning and marches along, in order, until the end. A non-linear approach, by contrast, allows the storyteller to use tools such as flashbacks. As an example, *Casablanca* uses flashbacks to show Rick and Ilsa falling in love in Paris, allowing the audience to understand the loss they have suffered since.
2. A traditional film voice is crafted with **modern filmmaking techniques**. Most filmmakers want to take advantage of the technology that is available to them. Examples include CGI, high-quality tripods, dollies, cranes, car mounts, and the latest cameras. Modernization applies to other aspects of filmmaking as well; for example, movie editing today is trending toward faster scenes with more shots.
3. That the traditional film voice caters to a **broad audience** means that anyone should be able to walk in, sit down, and enjoy the film. However, not all storytellers want to tell a story to a broad audience. Filmmakers who want to

THE NEW WORLD

Even though he had a \$50 million budget for the film *The New World*, director Terrence Malick eschewed many common techniques, including dolly and crane shots and CGI. By shooting on location with handheld and tripod shots, Malick was able to achieve a more naturalistic look.

communicate with a nontraditional voice may manipulate language, violence, sexuality, humor, gore, and so on. These can turn off some audience members while communicating a unique message to another set of audience members that is receptive to them.

- 4. Live-action, human characters that speak their dialogue** are easy to spot in traditional-voice films, but some nontraditional movies do not use this approach. For example, many animated films do not have human characters or live action, and some films are completely silent or use mute characters.
- 5. Characters being oblivious participants in the story** usually happens when an omniscient filmmaker takes the audience from location to location, dropping into the lives of various characters. However, with some nontraditional voices, the characters are aware of the story. One example is breaking the fourth wall, when characters turn to the lens and speak to the audience. Another is to insert documentary-like elements into the film.

DEPARTURES FROM THE TRADITIONAL VOICE

Some films use many elements of the traditional voice but depart from it in certain ways. For example, *When Harry Met Sally* is very close to following the traditional voice, except in one small way.

Every so often, intimate interviews appear, usually with a couple, as if it's part of a documentary. These couples don't interact with the main characters, but they do lay down a theme that reinforces the romance between the twin protagonists. The audience roots for Sally and Harry to become one of these couples.

Other films make more radical departures. For example, the French romance *The Artist* was a groundbreaking film when it was released in 2011—but not from the use of any new filmmaking technique. It went in the other direction, embracing an old-school film voice. Shot in black and white, it is the story of a filmmaker caught between the silent era and movies with dialogue. The filmmakers chose a unique voice, shooting nearly the entire movie as a silent film, complete with title cards.

VOICE AND GENRE

Voice defines how the story will be told (and, predictably, by whom) but without affecting the genre. For instance, *Carol* is a romance (which is its genre) told classically (which is its voice). *Lady and the Tramp* is a romance told as an animated kids' movie. *Anomalisa* is a romance told as an animated film for adults.

AUDIENCE EXPECTATIONS

As mentioned above, there are five main ways that a filmmaker makes an audience uncomfortable: language, violence, humor, sexuality, and gore. These can appear to different degrees and in different forms. For example, uncomfortable language doesn't just come in the form of swearing; it can also appear as religious slurs, racial slurs, and sexual degradation.

Violence isn't always physical. It can also be mental or emotional abuse, as is the case in *Cinderella*. Sexuality can be alluded to (as

in *North by Northwest*) or shown directly. Gore comes in different degrees as well: John Rambo sews up a wound in his arm in *First Blood*, but a man is shot to death without a drop of blood in the western *High Noon*.

The film *Harold and Maude* showcases degrees of humor. Though it's rated PG, it contains humor about suicide and mortality. Despite its rating, not everyone would want to take their children to see it.

CONCLUSION

A “general audience” in the United States once meant a white, middle-class, and Christian audience expecting to see male heterosexual heroes on the screen. Times have changed. New voices are using different techniques, pushing different boundaries, and telling different stories. Three examples of movies from filmmakers with their own unique voice are Tanya Hamilton's *Night Catches Us* (2010), Lisa Cholodenko's *High Art* (1998), and Alfredo De Villa's *Washington Heights* (2002).



If you'd like to find more, don't just go see the classics, new blockbusters, or the Academy Award winners. Go to art houses and check out top-10 lists of underappreciated films. Look back in the past, and look forward to new filmmakers just emerging. Student films and foreign films are also great sources for new cinematic voices to enjoy.

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

What are the last three movies you've seen? How do they adhere to the traditional voice of filmmaking? If they deviated from the traditional voice, why do you think that decision was made? More importantly, was the decision effective?

Explore a new voice. Go to IMDB.com and choose a director that you've never heard of—someone who is a different race and/or a different gender than your own. Then, without researching the film too deeply, go and see it. Reflect on how similar and how different your voices may be.

FILMS REFERENCED BY LECTURE

LECTURE 1

Amadeus. Directed by Milos Forman. Written by Peter Shaffer. United States: Orion Pictures, 1984.

American Graffiti. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas, Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck. United States: Universal Pictures, 1973.

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

Raging Bull. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader and Mardik Martin. United States: United Artists, 1980.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

Taxi Driver. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1976.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

The Godfather: Part II. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

LECTURE 2

Back to the Future. Directed by Robert Zemeckis. Written by Robert Zemeckis and Bob Gale. United States: Universal Pictures, 1985.

Badlands. Directed by Terrence Malick. Written by Terrence Malick. United States: Warner Bros., 1973.

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. United States: Warner Bros., 1982.

Caddyshack. Directed by Harold Ramis. Written by Douglas Kenney, Harold Ramis, and Brian Doyle-Murray. United States: Orion Pictures, 1980.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein and Howard Koch. United States: Warner Bros., 1942.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

Jaws. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Peter Benchley and Carl Gottlieb. United States: Universal Pictures, 1975.

Little Miss Sunshine. Directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris. Written by Michael Arndt. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2006.

Rear Window. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by John Michael Hayes. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1954.

Rocky. Directed by John G. Avildsen. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: United Artist, 1976.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

The Deer Hunter. Directed by Michael Cimino. Written by Deric Washburn. United States: Universal Pictures, 1978.

The Shawshank Redemption. Directed by Frank Darabont. Written by Frank Darabont. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1994.

The Silence of the Lambs. Directed by Jonathan Demme. Written by Ted Tally. United States: Orion Pictures, 1991.

The Sound of Music. Directed by Robert Wise. Written by Ernest Lehman. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1965.

The Wizard of Oz. Directed by Victor Fleming. Written by Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson, and Edgar Allan Woolf. United States: Loew's, Inc., 1939.

Thelma & Louise. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Callie Khouri. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1991.

Unforgiven. Directed by Clint Eastwood. Written by David Webb Peoples. United States: Warner Bros., 1982.

LECTURE 3

12 Years a Slave. Directed by Steve McQueen. Written by John Ridley. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2013.

28 Days Later. Directed by Danny Boyle. Written by Alex Garland. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2002.

A Bridge Too Far. Directed by Richard Attenborough. Written by William Goldman. United States: United Artists, 1977.

Alien. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Dan O'Bannon. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1979.

All Quiet on the Western Front. Directed by Lewis Milestone. Written by George Abbott. United States: Universal Pictures, 1930.

All the President's Men. Directed by Alan J. Pakula. Written by William Goldman. United States: Warner Bros., 1976.

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

Being John Malkovich. Directed by Spike Jonze. Written by Charlie Kaufman. United States: USA Films, 1999.

Black Hawk Down. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Ken Nolan. United Kingdom and United States: Columbia Pictures, 2001.

Blazing Saddles. Directed by Mel Brooks. Written by Andrew Bergman, Mel Brooks, Richard Pryor, Norman Steinberg, and Al Uger. United States: Warner Bros., 1974.

Caddyshack. Directed by Harold Ramis. Written by Douglas Kenney, Harold Ramis, and Brian Doyle-Murray. United States: Orion Pictures, 1980.

Die Hard. Directed by John McTiernan. Written by Steven E. de Souza and Jeb Stuart. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1988.

Do the Right Thing. Directed by Spike Lee. Written by Spike Lee. United States: Universal Pictures, 1989.

Eraserhead. Directed by David Lynch. Written by David Lynch. United States: Libra Films International, 1977.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind. Directed by Michel Gondry. Written by Charlie Kaufman. United States: Focus Features, 2004.

Friday the 13th. Directed by Sean S. Cunningham. Written by Victor Miller. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1980.

Full Metal Jacket. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick, Michael Herr and Gustav Hasford. United Kingdom: Columbia-Cannon-Warner, 1987.

Good Will Hunting. Directed by Gus Van Sant. Written by Matt Damon and Ben Affleck. United States: Miramax Films, 1997.

Green Berets. Directed by John Wayne and Ray Kellogg. Written by James Lee Barrett. United States: Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, 1968.

Halloween. Directed by John Carpenter. Written by John Carpenter and Debra Hill. United States: Compass International Pictures, 1978.

Invasion of the Body Snatchers. Directed by Philip Kaufman. Written by W. D. Richter. United States: United Artists, 1978.

Jaws. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Peter Benchley and Carl Gottlieb. United States: Universal Pictures, 1975.

Life of Pi. Directed by Ang Lee. Written by David Magee. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2012.

Moonlight. Directed by Barry Jenkins. Written by Barry Jenkins. United States: A24, 2016.

No Country for Old Men. Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. Written by Joel and Ethan Coen. United States: Miramax Films and Paramount Vantage, 2007.

Psycho. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by Joseph Stefano. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1960.

Rear Window. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by John Michael Hayes. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1954.

Ringu. Directed by Hideo Nakata. Written by Hiroshi Takahashi. Japan: Toho, 1998.

Rocky. Directed by John G. Avildsen. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: United Artist, 1976.

Rosemary's Baby. Directed by Roman Polanski. Written by Roman Polanski. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1968.

Saving Private Ryan. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Robert Rodat. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 1998.

Stalag 17. Directed by Billy Wilder. Written by Edwin Blum, Billy Wilder. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1953.

The Blair Witch Project. Directed by Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez. Written by Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez. United States: Artisan Entertainment, 1999.

The Dirty Dozen. Directed by Robert Aldrich. Written by Nunnally Johnson and Lukas Heller. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1967.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. Directed by Sergio Leone. Written by Age & Scarpelli, Luciano Vincenzoni, and Sergio Leone. United States: United Artists, 1966.

The Graduate. Directed by Mike Nichols. Written by Calder Willingham and Buck Henry. United States: United Artists, 1967.

The Hurt Locker. Directed by Kathryn Bigelow. Written by Mark Boal. United States: Summit Entertainment, 2008.

The Shining. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Diane Johnson and Stanley Kubrick. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros., 1980.

The Silence of the Lambs. Directed by Jonathan Demme. Written by Ted Tally. United States: Orion Pictures, 1991.

The Sting. Directed by George Roy Hill. Written by David S. Ward. United States: Universal Pictures, 1973.

The Tree of Life. Directed by Terrence Malick. Written by Terrence Malick. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2011.

LECTURE 4

Alive. Directed by Frank Marshall. Written by John Patrick Shanley. United States: Buena Vista Pictures, 1993.

American Gangster. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Steven Zaillian. United States: Universal Pictures, 2007.

*Bat*21*. Directed by Peter Markle. Written by William C. Anderson. United States: TriStar Pictures, 1988.

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 1982.

Chinatown. Directed by Roman Polanski. Written by Robert Towne. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

Cool Hand Luke. Directed by Stuart Rosenberg. Written by Donn Pearce and Frank R. Pierson. United States: Warner Bros.–Seven Arts, 1967.

Goldfinger. Directed by Guy Hamilton. Written by Richard Maibaum and Paul Dehn. United States: United Artists, 1964.

Hell or High Water. Directed by David Mackenzie. Written by Taylor Sheridan. United States: Lionsgate, 2016.

Midnight Express. Directed by Alan Parker. Written by Oliver Stone. Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States: Columbia Pictures, 1978.

Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation. Directed by Christopher McQuarrie. Written by Christopher McQuarrie. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2015.

Murder, My Sweet. Directed by Edward Dmytryk. Written by John Paxton. United States: RKO Pictures, 1944.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest. Directed by Milos Forman. Written by Bo Goldman and Lawrence Hauben. United States: United Artists, 1975.

Reservoir Dogs. Directed by Quentin Tarantino. Written by Quentin Tarantino. United States: Miramax Films, 1992.

Seven. Directed by David Fincher. Written by Andrew Kevin Walker. United States: New Line Cinema, 1995.

Sherlock Holmes. Directed by Guy Ritchie. Written by Michael Robert Johnson, Simon Kinberg, and Anthony Peckham. United Kingdom and United States: Roadshow Entertainment and Warner Bros. Pictures, 2009.

Taxi Driver. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1976.

The Big Sleep. Directed by Howard Hawks. Written by William Faulkner, Leigh Brackett, and Jules Furthman. United States: Warner Bros., 1946.

The Getaway. Directed by Sam Peckinpah. Written by Walter Hill. United States: National General Pictures, 1972.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

The Killing. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick. United States: United Artists, 1956.

The Silence of the Lambs. Directed by Jonathan Demme. Written by Ted Tally. United States: Orion Pictures, 1991.

Three Days of the Condor. Directed by Sydney Pollack. Written by Lorenzo Semple Jr., David Rayfiel. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1975.

Zodiac. Directed by David Fincher. Written by James Vanderbilt. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2007.

LECTURE 5

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

Bonnie and Clyde. Directed by Arthur Penn. Written by David Newman and Robert Benton. United States: Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, 1967.

Bull Durham. Directed by Ron Shelton. Written by Ron Shelton. United States: Orion Pictures, 1988.

Caddyshack. Directed by Harold Ramis. Written by Douglas Kenney, Harold Ramis, and Brian Doyle-Murray. United States: Orion Pictures, 1980.

Captain Fantastic. Directed by Matt Ross. Written by Matt Ross. United States: Universal Pictures, 2016.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein, and Howard Koch. United States: Warner Brothers, 1942.

Catch Me If You Can. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Jeff Nathanson. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 2002.

Day of the Jackal. Directed by Fred Zinnemann. Written by Kenneth Ross. United Kingdom: Universal Pictures, 1973.

Fargo. Directed by Joel Coen. Written by Joel Coen and Ethan Coen. United States: Gramercy Pictures, 1996.

Hoosiers. Directed by David Anspaugh. Written by Angelo Pizzo. United States: Orion Pictures, 1986.

Jules et Jim. Directed by François Truffaut. Written by François Truffaut and Jean Gruault. France: Janus Films, 1962.

Little Miss Sunshine. Directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris. Written by Michael Arndt. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2006.

Memento. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Christopher Nolan. United States: Newmarket, 2000.

No Country for Old Men. Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. Written by Joel and Ethan Coen. United States: Miramax Films and Paramount Vantage, 2007.

Ocean's Eleven. Directed by Steven Soderbergh. Written by Ted Griffin. United States: Warner Bros., 2001.

Pulp Fiction. Directed by Quentin Tarantino. Written by Quentin Tarantino. United States: Miramax Films, 1994.

Rocky. Directed by John G. Avildsen. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: United Artist, 1976.

Rounders. Directed by John Dahl. Written by David Levien and Brian Koppelman. United States: Miramax Films, 1998.

Seven. Directed by David Fincher. Written by Andrew Kevin Walker. United States: New Line Cinema, 1995.

Slap Shot. Directed by George Roy Hill. Written by Nancy Dowd. United States: Universal Pictures, 1977.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

The Godfather: Part II. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

The Road. Directed by John Hillcoat. Written by Joe Penhall. United States: The Icon Productions and Weinstein Company Dimension Films, 2009.

The Road Warrior. Directed by George Miller. Written by Terry Hayes, George Miller, and Brian Hannant. Australia: Warner Bros., 1981.

The Silence of the Lambs. Directed by Jonathan Demme. Written by Ted Tally. United States: Orion Pictures, 1991.

The Straight Story. Directed by David Lynch. Written by John Roach and Mary Sweeney. United States: Buena Vista Pictures, 1999.

The Wizard of Oz. Directed by Victor Fleming. Written by Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson, and Edgar Allan Woolf. United States: Loew's, Inc., 1939.

Thelma & Louise. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Callie Khouri. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1991.

Tin Cup. Directed by Ron Shelton. Written by John Norville and Ron Shelton. United States: Warner Bros., 1986.

LECTURE 6

Bridge on the River Kwai. Directed by David Lean. Written by Carl Foreman and Michael Wilson. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1957.

Do the Right Thing. Directed by Spike Lee. Written by Spike Lee. United States: Universal Pictures, 1989.

Glengarry Glen Ross. Directed by James Foley. Written by David Mamet. United States: New Line Cinema, 1992.

Good Will Hunting. Directed by Gus Van Sant. Written by Matt Damon and Ben Affleck. United States: Miramax Films, 1997.

Spider-Man. Directed by Sam Raimi. Written by David Koepp. United States: Columbia Pictures, 2002.

The Dark Knight. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Jonathan and Christopher Nolan. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures, 2008.

The Master. Directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. Written by Paul Thomas Anderson. United States: The Weinstein Company, 2012.

LECTURE 7

39 Steps. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by Charles Bennett and Ian Hay. Great Britain: Gaumont British Distributors, 1935.

All Quiet on the Western Front. Directed by Lewis Milestone. Written by George Abbott. United States: Universal Pictures, 1930.

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

Barton Fink. Directed by Joel Coen. Written by Ethan Coen and Joel Coen. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1991.

Basic Instinct. Directed by Paul Verhoeven. Written by Joe Eszterhas. United States: TriStar Pictures, 1992.

Birdman. Directed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu. Written by Alejandro G. Iñárritu, Nicolás Giacobone, Alexander Dinelaris Jr., and Armando Bo. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2014.

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 1982.

Blow Out. Directed by Brian De Palma. Written by Brian De Palma. United States: Filmways Pictures, 1981.

Bringing up Baby. Directed by Howard Hawks. Written by Dudley Nichols and Hagar Wilde. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1938.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein and Howard Koch. United States: Warner Brothers, 1942.

Children of Men. Directed by Alfonso Cuarón. Written by Alfonso Cuarón, Timothy J. Sexton, David Arata, Mark Fergus, and Hawk Ostby. United States and United Kingdom: Universal Pictures, 2006.

Citizen Kane. Directed by Orson Welles. Written by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Orson Welles. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1941.

Delicatessen. Directed by Marc Caro and Jean-Pierre Jeunet. Written by Gilles Adrien, Marc Caro and Jean-Pierre Jeunet. France: Miramax, 1991.

Down By Law. Directed by Jim Jarmusch. Written by Jim Jarmusch. United States: The Samuel Goldwyn Company, 1986.

Dracula. Directed by Terence Fisher. Written by Jimmy Sangster. United States: Universal International, 1958.

Easy Rider. Directed by Dennis Hopper. Written by Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper, Terry Southern. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1969.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind. Directed by Michel Gondry. Written by Charlie Kaufman. United States: Focus Features, 2004.

Frankenstein. Directed by James Whale. Written by Francis Edward Faragoh and Garrett Fort. United States: Universal Pictures, 1931.

Gone with the Wind. Directed by Victor Fleming. Written by Sidney Howard. United States: Loew's Inc., 1939.

Halloween. Directed by John Carpenter. Written by John Carpenter and Debra Hill. United States: Compass International Pictures, 1978.

House of Flying Daggers. Directed by Zhang Yimou. Written by Li Feng, Peter Wu, Wang Bin and Zhang Yimou. Hong Kong: Edko Films, 2004.

Klute. Directed by Alan J. Pakula. Written by Andy Lewis and Dave Lewis. United States: Warner Bros., 1971.

La Femme Nikita. Directed by Luc Besson. Written by Luc Besson. France: Les Films Du Loup, 1990.

Life of Pi. Directed by Ang Lee. Written by David Magee. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2012.

Lolita. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Vladimir Nabokov. United Kingdom and United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1962.

MASH. Directed by Robert Altman. Written by Ring Lardner, Jr. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1970.

Memento. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Christopher Nolan. United States: Newmarket, 2000.

Moonlight. Directed by Barry Jenkins. Written by Barry Jenkins. United States: A24, 2016.

Mr. Smith Goes to Hollywood. Directed by Frank Capra. Written by Sidney Buchman. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1939.

No Country for Old Men. Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. Written by Joel and Ethan Coen. United States: Miramax Films and Paramount Vantage, 2007.

Of Mice and Men. Directed by Gary Sinise. Written by Horton Foote. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1992.

Paths of Glory. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick, Calder Willingham and Jim Thompson. United States: United Artists, 1957.

Planet of the Apes. Directed by Franklin J. Schaffner. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1968.

Raging Bull. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader and Mardik Martin. United States: United Artists, 1980.

Rebel Without a Cause. Directed by Nicholas Ray. Written by Stewart Stern. United States: Warner Bros., 1955.

Saving Private Ryan. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Robert Rodat. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 1998.

The Dark Knight. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Jonathan and Christopher Nolan. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures, 2008.

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo. Directed by David Fincher. Written by Steven Zaillian. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures, 2011.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

The Graduate. Directed by Mike Nichols. Written by Calder Willingham and Buck Henry. United States: United Artists, 1967.

The Grapes of Wrath. Directed by John Ford. Written by Nunnally Johnson. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1940.

The Great Dictator. Directed by Charlie Chaplin. Written by Charlie Chaplin. United States: United Artists, 1940.

The Imitation Game. Directed by Morten Tyldum. Written by Graham Moore. United States: The Weinstein Company, 2014.

The Manchurian Candidate. Directed by John Frankenheimer. Written by George Axelrod. United States: United Artists, 1962.

The Thing. Directed by John Carpenter. Written by Bill Lancaster. United States: Universal Pictures, 1982.

Triumph of the Will. Directed by Leni Riefenstahl. Written by Leni Riefenstahl and Walter Ruttmann. Germany: Universum Film AG, 1935.

Twelve Monkeys. Directed by Terry Gilliam. Written by David Peoples and Janet Peoples. United States: Universal Pictures, 1995.

Vertigo. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by Alec Coppel and Samuel Taylor. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1958.

Zodiac. Directed by David Fincher. Written by James Vanderbilt. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2007.

LECTURE 8

American Beauty. Directed by Sam Mendes. Written by Alan Ball. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 1999.

Blow-Up. Directed by Michelangelo Antonioni. Written by Michelangelo Antonioni and Tonino Guerra. United Kingdom: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1966.

Jaws. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Peter Benchley and Carl Gottlieb. United States: Universal Pictures, 1975.

Malcolm X. Directed by Spike Lee. Written by Spike Lee and Arnold Perl. United States: Warner Bros. and Largo International, 1992.

Moonlight. Directed by Barry Jenkins. Written by Barry Jenkins. United States: A24, 2016.

The Dark Knight. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Jonathan and Christopher Nolan. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures, 2008.

The Matrix. Directed by the Wachowskis. Written by the Wachowskis. United States: Warner Bros., 1999.

The Shining. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Diane Johnson and Stanley Kubrick. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros., 1980.

LECTURE 9

Good Will Hunting. Directed by Gus Van Sant. Written by Matt Damon and Ben Affleck. United States: Miramax Films, 1997.

Raging Bull. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader and Mardik Martin. United States: United Artists, 1980.

Rashomon. Directed by Akira Kurosawa. Written by Akira Kurosawa and Shinobu Hashimoto. Japan: Daiei Film, 1950.

Slumdog Millionaire. Directed by Danny Boyle. Written by Simon Beaufoy. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2009.

The Godfather: Part II. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

The Irishman. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Steven Zaillian. United States: Netflix, 2018.

The Manchurian Candidate. Directed by John Frankenheimer. Written by George Axelrod. United States: United Artists, 1962.

The Wizard of Oz. Directed by Victor Fleming. Written by Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson, and Edgar Allan Woolf. United States: Loew's, Inc., 1939.

LECTURE 10

A Beautiful Mind. Directed by Ron Howard. Written by Akiva Goldsman. United States: Universal Pictures, 2001.

American Beauty. Directed by Sam Mendes. Written by Alan Ball. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 1999.

Once Upon a Time in America. Directed by Sergio Leone. Written by Leonardo Benvenuti, Piero De Bernardi, Enrico Medioli, Franco Arcalli, Franco Ferrini and Sergio Leone. United States: The Ladd Company; Europe: Warner Bros., 1984.

Raging Bull. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader and Mardik Martin. United States: United Artists, 1980.

Rashomon. Directed by Akira Kurosawa. Written by Akira Kurosawa and Shinobu Hashimoto. Japan: Daiei Film, 1950.

Reservoir Dogs. Directed by Quentin Tarantino. Written by Quentin Tarantino. United States: Miramax Films, 1992.

Slumdog Millionaire. Directed by Danny Boyle. Written by Simon Beaufoy. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2009.

The Godfather: Part II. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

The Irishman. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Steven Zaillian. United States: Netflix, 2018.

LECTURE 11

American Graffiti. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas, Gloria Katz, and Willard Huyck. United States: Universal Pictures, 1973.

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

The Hurt Locker. Directed by Kathryn Bigelow. Written by Mark Boal. United States: Summit Entertainment, 2008.

LECTURE 12

Apollo 13. Directed by Ron Howard. Written by William Broyles, Jr. and Al Reinert. United States: Universal Pictures, 1995.

Room. Directed by Lenny Abrahamson. Written by Emma Donoghue. Canada: Elevation Pictures, 2015.

The Shining. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Diane Johnson and Stanley Kubrick. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros., 1980.

LECTURE 13

2001: A Space Odyssey. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1968.

7th Voyage of Sinbad. Directed by Nathan H. Juran. Written by Kenneth Kolb. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1958.

Babe. Directed by Chris Noonan. Written by George Miller and Chris Noonan. United States: Universal Pictures, 1995.

Beast from 20,000 Fathoms. Directed by Eugène Lourié. Written by Fred Freiberger, Eugène Lourié, Louis Morheim and Robert Smith. United States: Warner Bros., 1953.

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 1982.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein and Howard Koch. United States: Warner Brothers, 1942.

Casino. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Nicholas Pileggi and Martin Scorsese. United States: Universal Pictures, 1995.

Clash of the Titans. Directed by Desmond Davis. Written by Beverley Cross. United States: United Artists, 1981.

Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid. Directed by Carl Reiner. Written by Carl Reiner, George Gipe, and Steve Martin. United States: Universal Pictures, 1982.

Fight Club. Directed by David Fincher. Written by Jim Uhls. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1999.

Forrest Gump. Directed by Robert Zemeckis. Written by Eric Roth. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1994.

Gertie the Dinosaur. Directed by Winsor McCay. Written by Winsor McCay. United States: William Randolph Hearst, 1914.

Golden Voyage of Sinbad. Directed by Gordon Hessler. Written by Brian Clemens and Ray Harryhausen. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1974.

Jason and the Argonauts. Directed by Don Chaffey. Written by Apollonios Rhodios. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1963.

Jurassic Park. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Michael Crichton and David Koepp. United States: Universal Pictures, 1993.

King Kong. Directed by Merian C. Coope and Ernest B. Schoedsack. Written by James Creelman and Ruth Rose. United States: Radio Pictures, 1933.

Mary Poppins. Directed by Robert Stevenson. Written by Don DaGradi and Bill Walsh. United States: Buena Vista Distribution, 1964.

Metropolis. Directed by Fritz Lang. Written by Thea von Harbou. Germany: Universum Film AG, 1927.

Planet of the Apes. Directed by Franklin J. Schaffner. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1968.

Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger. Directed by Sam Wanamaker. Written by Beverley Cross. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1977.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

Terminator 2: Judgment Day. Directed by James Cameron. Written by James Cameron and William Wisher. United States: TriStar Pictures, 1991.

The Abyss. Directed by James Cameron. Written by James Cameron. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1989.

The Lost World. Directed by Harry O. Hoyt. Written by Marion Fairfax. United States: First National Pictures, 1925.

The Matrix. Directed by the Wachowskis. Written by the Wachowskis. United States: Warner Bros., 1999.

The Ten Commandments. Directed by Cecil B. DeMille. Written by Jeanie MacPherson. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1923.

Tron. Directed by Steven Lisberger. Written by Steven Lisberger. United States: Buena Vista Distribution, 1982.

Zelig. Directed by Woody Allen. Written by Woody Allen. United States: Warner Bros., 1983.

LECTURE 14

300. Directed by Zack Snyder. Written by Zack Snyder, Kurt Johnstad and Michael B. Gordon. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 2006.

Able Edwards. Directed by Graham Robertson. Written by Graham Robertson. United States: Heretic Films Indie, 2004.

Avatar. Directed by James Cameron. Written by James Cameron. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2009.

Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within. Directed by Hironobu Sakaguchi and Motonori Sakakibara. Written by Al Reinert and Jeff Vintar. United States: Columbia Pictures, 2001.

Gladiator. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by David Franzoni, John Logan, and William Nicholson. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 2004.

Gravity. Directed by Alfonso Cuarón. Written by Alfonso Cuarón and Jonás Cuarón. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 2014.

Inception. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Christopher Nolan. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 2010.

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Willard Huyck and Gloria Katz. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1984.

Jason and the Argonauts. Directed by Don Chaffey. Written by Apollonios Rhodios. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1963.

Life of Pi. Directed by Ang Lee. Written by David Magee. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2012.

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest. Directed by Gore Verbinski. Written by Ted Elliot and Terry Rossio. United States: Buena Vista Pictures, 2006.

Return of the Jedi. Directed by Richard Marquand. Written by Lawrence Kasdan and George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1983.

Sin City. Directed by Frank Miller, Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino. Written by Frank Miller and Robert Rodriguez. United States: Miramax, 2005.

Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow. Directed by Kerry Conran. Written by Kerry Conran. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2004.

The Dark Knight. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Jonathan and Christopher Nolan. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures, 2008.

The Golden Compass. Directed by Chris Weitz. Written by Chris Weitz. United Kingdom: Entertainment Film Distributors, 2007.

The Lord of the Rings (film series). Directed by Peter Jackson. Written by Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Stephen Sinclair. United States: New Line Cinema, 2001, 2002, and 2003.

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers. Directed by Peter Jackson. Written by Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Stephen Sinclair. United States: New Line Cinema, 2002.

The Perfect Storm. Directed by Wolfgang Petersen. Written by William D. Wittliff. United States: Warner Bros., 2000.

The Polar Express. Directed by Robert Zemeckis. Written by Robert Zemeckis and William Broyles, Jr. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 2004.

Zodiac. Directed by David Fincher. Written by James Vanderbilt. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2007.

LECTURE 15

2001: A Space Odyssey. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1968.

Amadeus. Directed by Milos Forman. Written by Peter Shaffer. United States: Orion Pictures, 1984.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein and Howard Koch. United States: Warner Brothers, 1942.

Citizen Kane. Directed by Orson Welles. Written by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Orson Welles. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1941.

Good Will Hunting. Directed by Gus Van Sant. Written by Matt Damon and Ben Affleck. United States: Miramax Films, 1997.

Harold and Maude. Directed by Hal Ashby. Written by Colin Higgins. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1971.

Jaws. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Peter Benchley and Carl Gottlieb. United States: Universal Pictures, 1975.

Midnight Cowboy. Directed by John Schlesinger. Written by Waldo Salt. United States: United Artists, 1969.

Moulin Rouge!. Directed by Baz Luhrmann. Written by Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2001.

No Country for Old Men. Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. Written by Joel and Ethan Coen. United States: Miramax Films and Paramount Vantage, 2007.

Out of Africa. Directed by Sydney Pollack. Written by Kurt Luedtke. United States: Universal Pictures, 1985.

Reservoir Dogs. Directed by Quentin Tarantino. Written by Quentin Tarantino. United States: Miramax Films, 1992.

Rocky. Directed by John G. Avildsen. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: United Artist, 1976.

Rocky II. Directed by Sylvester Stallone. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: United Artists, 1977.

Rocky III. Directed by Sylvester Stallone. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: MGM/UA Entertainment Company, 1982.

The Empire Strikes Back. Directed by Irvin Kershner. Written by Leigh Brackett and Lawrence Kasdan (story by George Lucas). United States: 20th Century Fox, 1980.

The Shining. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Diane Johnson and Stanley Kubrick. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros., 1980.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

Walkabout. Directed by Nicolas Roeg. Written by Edward Bond. Australia: 20th Century Fox, 1971.

LECTURE 16

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 1982.

Chinatown. Directed by Roman Polanski. Written by Robert Towne. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

Days of Heaven. Directed by Terrence Malick. Written by Terrence Malick. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1978.

Do the Right Thing. Directed by Spike Lee. Written by Spike Lee. United States: Universal Pictures, 1989.

Life of Pi. Directed by Ang Lee. Written by David Magee. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2012.

O Brother, Where Art Thou?. Directed by Joel Coen. Written by Ethan Coen and Joel Coen. United States: Buena Vista Pictures Distribution, 2000.

Rumble Fish. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by S. E. Hinton and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Universal Pictures, 1983.

Schindler's List. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Steven Zaillian. United States: Universal Pictures, 1993.

Sin City. Directed by Frank Miller, Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino. Written by Frank Miller and Robert Rodriguez. United States: Miramax, 2005.

The Conformist. Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci. Written by Bernardo Bertolucci. Italy: Paramount Pictures, 1970.

The Incredibles. Directed by Brad Bird. Written by Brad Bird. United States: Buena Vista Pictures, 2004.

The Martian. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Drew Goddard. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2015.

The Revenant. Directed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu. Written by Mark L. Smith and Alejandro G. Iñárritu. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2015.

The Shining. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Diane Johnson and Stanley Kubrick. United Kingdom and United States: Warner Bros., 1980.

Vertigo. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by Alec Coppel and Samuel Taylor. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1958.

LECTURE 17

The Imitation Game. Directed by Morten Tyldum. Written by Graham Moore. United States: The Weinstein Company, 2014.

One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest. Directed by Milo Forman. Written by Bo Goldman and Lawrence Hauben. United States: United Artists, 1975.

LECTURE 18

Lean on Me. Directed by John G. Avildsen. Written by Michael Schiffer. United States: Warner Bros., 1989.

Million Dollar Baby. Directed by Clint Eastwood. Written by Paul Haggis. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures, 2004.

The Shawshank Redemption. Directed by Frank Darabont. Written by Frank Darabont. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1994.

LECTURE 19

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

Barton Fink. Directed by Joel Coen. Written by Ethan Coen and Joel Coen. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1991.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Directed by George Roy Hill. Written by William Goldman. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1969.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein and Howard Koch. United States: Warner Brothers, 1942.

Citizen Kane. Directed by Orson Welles. Written by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Orson Welles. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1941.

Coraline. Directed by Henry Selick. Written by Henry Selick. United States: Focus Features, 2009.

Dog Day Afternoon. Directed by Sidney Lumet. Written by Frank Pierson. United States: Warner Bros., 1975.

Fight Club. Directed by David Fincher. Written by Jim Uhls. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1999.

Groundhog Day. Directed by Harold Ramis. Written by Harold Ramis and Danny Rubin. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1993.

Inside Out. Directed by Pete Docter. Written by Pete Docter, Meg LeFauve and Josh Cooley. United States: Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2015.

Spirited Away. Directed by Hayao Miyazaki. Written by Hayao Miyazaki. Japan: Toho, 2001.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

The Conversation. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

The Deer Hunter. Directed by Michael Cimino. Written by Deric Washburn. United States: Universal Pictures, 1978.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

The Wizard of Oz. Directed by Victor Fleming. Written by Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson, and Edgar Allan Woolf. United States: Loew's, Inc., 1939.

Thelma & Louise. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Callie Khouri. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1991.

LECTURE 20

*Bat*21*. Directed by Peter Markle. Written by William C. Anderson. United States: TriStar Pictures, 1988.

Bonnie and Clyde. Directed by Arthur Penn. Written by David Newman and Robert Benton. United States: Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, 1967.

Boys Don't Cry. Directed by Kimberly Peirce. Written by Kimberly Peirce and Andy Bienen. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 1999.

Days of Heaven. Directed by Terrence Malick. Written by Terrence Malick. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1978.

Fences. Directed by Denzel Washington. Written by August Wilson. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2016.

Get Out. Directed by Jordan Peele. Written by Jordan Peele. United States: Universal Pictures, 2017.

Harold and Maude. Directed by Hal Ashby. Written by Colin Higgins. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1971.

Hoosiers. Directed by David Anspaugh. Written by Angelo Pizzo. United States: Orion Pictures, 1986.

Million Dollar Baby. Directed by Clint Eastwood. Written by Paul Haggis. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures, 2004.

Mississippi Burning. Directed by Alan Parker. Written by Chris Gerolmo. United States: Orion Pictures, 1988.

Psycho. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by Joseph Stefano. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1960.

Raging Bull. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader and Mardik Martin. United States: United Artists, 1980.

Rosemary's Baby. Directed by Roman Polanski. Written by Roman Polanski. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1968.

Rounders. Directed by John Dahl. Written by David Levien and Brian Koppelman. United States: Miramax Films, 1998.

Sexy Beast. Directed by Jonathan Glazer. Written by Louis Mellis and David Scinto. United Kingdom: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2001.

Superman. Directed by Richard Donner. Written by Mario Puzo, David Newman, Leslie Newman and Robert Benton. United States: Warner Bros., 1978.

The Birdcage. Directed by Mike Nichols. Written by Elaine May. United States: United Artists, 1996.

The Conversation. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

The French Connection. Directed by William Friedkin. Written by Ernest Tidyman. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1971.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

The Royal Tenenbaums. Directed by Wes Anderson. Written by Wes Anderson and Owen Wilson. United States: Buena Vista Pictures, 2001.

The Thin Red Line. Directed by Terrence Malick. Written by Terrence Malick. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1998.

Unforgiven. Directed by Clint Eastwood. Written by David Webb Peoples. United States: Warner Bros., 1982.

What's Eating Gilbert Grape. Directed by Lasse Hallström. Written by Peter Hedges. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1993.

LECTURE 21

About Last Night. Directed by Edward Zwick. Written by Tim Kazurinsky and Denise DeClue. United States: TriStar Pictures, 1986.

Do the Right Thing. Directed by Spike Lee. Written by Spike Lee. United States: Universal Pictures, 1989.

Dumbo. Directed by Ben Sharpsteen. Written by Otto Englander, Joe Grant and Dick Huemer. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1941.

Full Metal Jacket. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick, Michael Herr and Gustav Hasford. United Kingdom: Columbia-Cannon-Warner, 1987.

Halloween. Directed by John Carpenter. Written by John Carpenter and Debra Hill. United States: Compass International Pictures, 1978.

Monster. Directed by Patty Jenkins. Written by Patty Jenkins. United States: Newmarket Films, 2003.

Precious. Directed by Lee Daniels. Written by Geoffrey S. Fletcher. United States: Lionsgate, 2009.

Quantum of Solace. Directed by Marc Forster. Written by Paul Haggis, Neal Purvis and Robert Wade. United States: Columbia Pictures, 2008.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

The Lord of the Rings (film series). Directed by Peter Jackson. Written by Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens and Stephen Sinclair. United States: New Line Cinema, 2001, 2002, and 2003.

The Piano. Directed by Jane Campion. Written by Jane Campion. United States: Miramax Films, 1993.

True Grit. Directed by Henry Hathaway. Written by Marguerite Roberts. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1969.

Valhalla Rising. Directed by Nicolas Winding Refn. Written by Nicolas Winding Refn Roy Jacobsen. Denmark: Scanbox Entertainment, 2009.

Young Frankenstein. Directed by Mel Brooks. Written by Mel Brooks and Gene Wilder. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1974.

LECTURE 22

2001: A Space Odyssey. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1968.

A Beautiful Mind. Directed by Ron Howard. Written by Akiva Goldsman. United States: Universal Pictures, 2001.

Alive. Directed by Frank Marshall. Written by John Patrick Shanley. United States: Buena Vista Pictures, 1993.

Apocalypse Now. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by John Milius and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: United Artists, 1979.

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 1982.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Directed by George Roy Hill. Written by William Goldman. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1969.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Directed by Tim Burton. Written by John August. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 2005.

Drugstore Cowboy. Directed by Gus Van Sant. Written by Gus Van Sant and Daniel Yost. United States: International Video Entertainment and Avenue Pictures, 1989.

Easy Rider. Directed by Dennis Hopper. Written by Peter Fonda, Dennis Hopper, Terry Southern. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1969.

Malcolm X. Directed by Spike Lee. Written by Spike Lee and Arnold Perl. United States: Warner Bros. and Largo International, 1992.

MASH. Directed by Robert Altman. Written by Ring Lardner, Jr. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1970.

Men in Black. Directed by Barry Sonnenfeld. Written by Ed Solomon. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1997.

Midnight Cowboy. Directed by John Schlesinger. Written by Waldo Salt. United States: United Artists, 1969.

Million Dollar Baby. Directed by Clint Eastwood. Written by Paul Haggis. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures, 2004.

Nashville. Directed by Robert Altman. Written by Joan Tewkesbury. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1975.

No Country for Old Men. Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. Written by Joel and Ethan Coen. United States: Miramax Films and Paramount Vantage, 2007.

Ocean's Eleven. Directed by Steven Soderbergh. Written by Ted Griffin. United States: Warner Bros., 2001.

Precious. Directed by Lee Daniels. Written by Geoffrey S. Fletcher. United States: Lionsgate, 2009.

Primer. Directed by Shane Carruth. Written by Shane Carruth. United States: THINKFilm, 2004.

Raging Bull. Directed by Martin Scorsese. Written by Paul Schrader and Mardik Martin. United States: United Artists, 1980.

Rocky. Directed by John G. Avildsen. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: United Artist, 1976.

Saving Private Ryan. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Written by Robert Rodat. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 1998.

Seven. Directed by David Fincher. Written by Andrew Kevin Walker. United States: New Line Cinema, 1995.

Some Like It Hot. Directed by Billy Wilder. Written by Billy Wilder and I.A.L. Diamond. United States: United Artists, 1959.

Star Wars. Directed by George Lucas. Written by George Lucas. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1977.

The Big Chill. Directed by Lawrence Kasdan. Written by Lawrence Kasdan and Barbara Benedek. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1983.

The Birds. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by Evan Hunter. United States: Universal Pictures, 1963.

The Dirty Dozen. Directed by Robert Aldrich. Written by Nunnally Johnson and Lukas Heller. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1967.

The Elephant Man. Directed by David Lynch. Written by Christopher De Vore, Eric Bergren and David Lynch. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1980.

The Fugitive. Directed by Andrew Davis. Written by David Twohy and Jeb Stuart. United States: Warner Bros., 1993.

The Imitation Game. Directed by Morten Tyldum. Written by Graham Moore. United States: The Weinstein Company, 2014.

The Silence of the Lambs. Directed by Jonathan Demme. Written by Ted Tally. United States: Orion Pictures, 1991.

The Verdict. Directed by Sidney Lumet. Written by David Mamet. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1982.

The Wizard of Oz. Directed by Victor Fleming. Written by Noel Langley, Florence Ryerson, and Edgar Allan Woolf. United States: Loew's, Inc., 1939.

Thelma & Louise. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Callie Khouri. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1991.

Three Days of the Condor. Directed by Sydney Pollack. Written by Lorenzo Semple Jr. and David Rayfiel. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1975.

LECTURE 23

A Beautiful Mind. Directed by Ron Howard. Written by Akiva Goldsman. United States: Universal Pictures, 2001.

A Clockwork Orange. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick. United States: Warner Brothers, 1971.

American Beauty. Directed by Sam Mendes. Written by Alan Ball. United States: DreamWorks Pictures, 1999.

Annie Hall. Directed by Woody Allen. Written by Woody Allen and Marshall Brickman. United States: United Artists, 1977.

Cinderella. Directed by Clyde Geronimi, Hamilton Luske and Wilfred Jackson. Written by Ken Anderson, Perce Pearce, Homer Brightman, Winston Hibler, Bill Peet, Erdman Penner, Harry Reeves, Joe Rinaldi and Ted Sears. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1950.

Gerry. Directed by Gus Van Sant. Written by Casey Affleck, Matt Damon and Gus Van Sant. United States: THINKFilm, 2003.

MASH. Directed by Robert Altman. Written by Ring Lardner, Jr. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1970.

Memento. Directed by Christopher Nolan. Written by Christopher Nolan. United States: Newmarket, 2000.

Midnight Express. Directed by Alan Parker. Written by Oliver Stone. Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States: Columbia Pictures, 1978.

No Country for Old Men. Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. Written by Joel and Ethan Coen. United States: Miramax Films and Paramount Vantage, 2007.

Sherlock Holmes. Directed by Guy Ritchie. Written by Michael Robert Johnson, Simon Kinberg, and Anthony Peckham. United Kingdom and United States: Roadshow Entertainment and Warner Bros. Pictures, 2009.

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly. Directed by Julian Schnabel. Written by Ronald Harwood. France: Pathé, 2007.

The Jerk. Directed by Carl Reiner. Written by Steve Martin, Carl Gottlieb and Michael Elias. United States: Universal Pictures, 1979.

The Shawshank Redemption. Directed by Frank Darabont. Written by Frank Darabont. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1994.

LECTURE 24

12 Years a Slave. Directed by Steve McQueen. Written by John Ridley. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2013.

Akira. Directed by Katsuhiro Otomo. Written by Katsuhiro Otomo and Izo Hashimoto. Japan: Toho, 1988.

Amadeus. Directed by Miloš Forman. Written by Peter Shaffer. United States: Orion Pictures, 1984.

American Splendor. Directed by Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini. Written by Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini. United States: Fine Line Features, 2003.

Anomalisa. Directed by Charlie Kaufman and Duke Johnson. Written by Charlie Kaufman. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2015.

Apollo 13. Directed by Ron Howard. Written by William Broyles, Jr. and Al Reinert. United States: Universal Pictures, 1995.

Blade Runner. Directed by Ridley Scott. Written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures, 1982.

Bugsy Malone. Directed by Alan Parker. Written by Alan Parker. United Kingdom: Rank Organization, 1976.

Carol. Directed by Todd Haynes. Written by Phyllis Nagy. United Kingdom and United States: StudioCanal and The Weinstein Company, 2015.

Casablanca. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein and Howard Koch. United States: Warner Bros., 1942.

Cinderella. Directed by Clyde Geronimi, Hamilton Luske and Wilfred Jackson. Written by Ken Anderson, Perce Pearce, Homer Brightman, Winston Hibler, Bill Peet, Erdman Penner, Harry Reeves, Joe Rinaldi, and Ted Sears. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1950.

Cool Hand Luke. Directed by Stuart Rosenberg. Written by Donn Pearce and Frank R. Pierson. United States: Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, 1967.

Dead Poets Society. Directed by Peter Weir. Written by Tom Schulman. United States: Buena Vista Pictures Distribution, 1989.

Diner. Directed by Barry Levinson. Written by Barry Levinson. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1982.

Down By Law. Directed by Jim Jarmusch. Written by Jim Jarmusch. United States: The Samuel Goldwyn Company, 1986.

Escape from Alcatraz. Directed by Don Siegel. Written by Richard Tuggle. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1979.

Fantasia. Directed by Samuel Armstrong, James Algar, Bill Roberts, Paul Satterfield, Ben Sharpsteen, David D. Hand, Hamilton Luske, Jim Handley, Ford Beebe, T. Hee, Norman Ferguson, and Wilfred Jackson. Story by Joe Grant and Dick Huemer. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1940.

First Blood. Directed by Ted Kotcheff. Written by Michael Kozoll, William Sackheim and Sylvester Stallone. United States: Orion Pictures, 1982.

Full Metal Jacket. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Stanley Kubrick, Michael Herr and Gustav Hasford. United Kingdom: Columbia-Cannon-Warner, 1987.

Groundhog Day. Directed by Harold Ramis. Written by Harold Ramis and Danny Rubin. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1993.

Guys and Dolls. Directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz. Written by Joseph L. Mankiewicz and Ben Hecht. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1955.

Harold and Maude. Directed by Hal Ashby. Written by Colin Higgins. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1971.

High Art. Directed by Lisa Cholodenko. Written by Lisa Cholodenko. United States: October Films, 1998.

High Noon. Directed by Fred Zinnemann. Written by Carl Foreman. United States: United Artists, 1952.

Hoosiers. Directed by David Anspaugh. Written by Angelo Pizzo. United States: Orion Pictures, 1986.

Jeremiah Johnson. Directed by Sydney Pollack. Written by Edward Anhalt and John Milius. United States: Warner Bros., 1972.

Lady and the Tramp. Directed by Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, and Hamilton Luske. Written by Don DaGradi, Erdman Penner, Joe Rinaldi, and Ralph Wright. United States: Buena Vista Distribution, 1955.

Lolita. Directed by Stanley Kubrick. Written by Vladimir Nabokov. United Kingdom and United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1962.

Malcolm X. Directed by Spike Lee. Written by Spike Lee and Arnold Perl. United States: Warner Bros. and Largo International, 1992.

Moulin Rouge!. Directed by Baz Luhrmann. Written by Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2001.

Night Catches Us. Directed by Tanya Hamilton. Written by Tanya Hamilton. United States: Magnolia Pictures, 2010.

North by Northwest. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Written by Ernest Lehman. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1959.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest. Directed by Milos Forman. Written by Bo Goldman and Lawrence Hauben. United States: United Artists, 1975.

Ordinary People. Directed by Robert Redford. Written by Alvin Sargent. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1980.

Rain Man. Directed by Barry Levinson. Written by Barry Morrow and Ronald Bass. United States: MGM/UA Communications Company, 1988.

Rashomon. Directed by Akira Kurosawa. Written by Akira Kurosawa and Shinobu Hashimoto. Japan: Daiei Film, 1950.

Rocky. Directed by John G. Avildsen. Written by Sylvester Stallone. United States: United Artist, 1976.

Seven. Directed by David Fincher. Written by Andrew Kevin Walker. United States: New Line Cinema, 1995.

Sideways. Directed by Alexander Payne. Written by Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2004.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Directed by David Hand, William Cottrell, Wilfred Jackson, Larry Morey, Perce Pearce, Ben Sharpsteen. Written by Ted Sears, Richard Creedon, Otto Englander, Dick Rickard,

Earl Hurd, Merrill De Maris, Dorothy Ann Blank, and Webb Smith. United States: RKO Radio Pictures, 1937.

Some Like It Hot. Directed by Billy Wilder. Written by Billy Wilder and I.A.L. Diamond. United States: United Artists, 1959.

Stalag 17. Directed by Billy Wilder. Written by Edwin Blum, Billy Wilder. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1953.

Sunset Boulevard. Directed by Billy Wilder. Written by Charles Brackett, Billy Wilder and D. M. Marshman, Jr. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1950.

The Artist. Directed by Michel Hazanavicius. Written by Michel Hazanavicius. France: Warner Bros., 2011.

The Big Short. Directed by Adam McKay. Written by Adam McKay and Charles Randolph. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2015.

The Brother from Another Planet. Directed by John Sayles. Written by John Sayles. United States: Cinecom Pictures, 1984.

The French Lieutenant's Woman. Directed by Karel Reisz. Written by Harold Pinter. United Kingdom: United Artists, 1981.

The Godfather. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1972.

The Godfather: Part II. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Written by Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1974.

The Lion King. Directed by Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff. Written by Irene Mecchi, Jonathan Roberts and Linda Woolverton. United States: Buena Vista Pictures, 1994.

The New World. Directed by Terrence Malick. Written by Terrence Malick. United States: New Line Cinema, 2005.

The Red Turtle. Directed by Michaël Dudok de Wit. Written by Michaël Dudok de Wit and Pascale Ferran. Japan: Toho, 2016.

The Three Stooges. Directed by Bobby Farrelly and Peter Farrelly. Written by Mike Cerrone, Peter Farrelly and Bobby Farrelly. United States: 20th Century Fox, 2012.

The Verdict. Directed by Sidney Lumet. Written by David Mamet. United States: 20th Century Fox, 1982.

Three Days of the Condor. Directed by Sydney Pollack. Written by Lorenzo Semple Jr., David Rayfiel. United States: Paramount Pictures, 1975.

True Grit. Directed by Ethan Coen and Joel Coen. Written by Ethan Coen and Joel Coen. United States: Paramount Pictures, 2010.

Washington Heights. Directed by Alfredo De Villa. Written by Nat Moss and Alfredo De Villa. United States: Lions Gate, 2002.

When Harry Met Sally. Directed by Rob Reiner. Written by Nora Ephron. United States: Columbia Pictures, 1989.

Whiplash. Directed by Damien Chazelle. Written by Damien Chazelle. United States: Sony Pictures Classics, 2014.

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