

Code: FLMD-220:E.01

Course title: Introduction to Film Theory

Course convenors: László Strausz

Class time and place: Wednesdays, 12:30-15:45 @ -137
Course meets in double sessions on: Feb21, Mar6, Mar20, Apr3, Apr17, May8

Course type: Lecture

Course content: The course is designed as a topical introduction into film theory. Instead of investigating film theory through its historical progression, we will rather focus problems that stand in the forefront of the discipline. Primarily, we will examine broad patterns in how the medium conveys meaning, elicits emotion and addresses audiences. It is concerned with the nature of the medium itself and with the conventions it has developed for what is 'cinematic.' The secondary focus of the course is to acquire skills in applying these theoretical ideas to particular film texts, testing these ideas to see how well they fit individual cases.

1. Introduction. What is theory?
2. Authors and audiences
3. Narrative and cognition
4. Genres
5. Ideological criticism: feminism and psychoanalysis
6. Postcolonial theory

Requirements: Participants will have to regularly attend the seminars and prepare for classes by familiarizing themselves with the required readings. Each week there will be a short quiz on the readings, which will count towards your final grade. Students will finish the semester by writing an essay-style final examination.

Final grade: based on participation, weekly quizzes, final exam

Learning outcomes: Students will (1) develop a general sense of the specificities of theoretically oriented investigations within film studies, (2) understand how theory is related to the other areas of the discipline, (3) conceptualize the historical development of film theory as various ways to interpret screen media texts, (4) develop awareness about the social-cultural contexts of film theory, and (5) cultivate critical thinking and writing skills.

Indicative Reading: Select parts from Cohen-Braudy: Film Theory and Criticism. OUP. 2009 (CB); and some additional texts.

Week #1: Andrew – Concepts in Film Theory 3-18.

Week #2: CB 451-470.

Week #3: Bordwell – Narration in the Fiction Film, Chapter 4

Week #4: CB 552-575

Week #5: CB 711-722.

Week #6: CB 751-767

Readings will be uploaded to <http://lstrausz.web.elte.hu/>
