

Film 185S

Advanced Topics in Film Studies: Docu-Fiction

Summer 2018 (Session I)

Tuesday + Thursday 01:00PM – 04:30PM

Earth & Marine B210

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Dept. of Film and Digital Media

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Office hours: Wednesday 2:30PM- 4:30PM (or by appointment) at McHenry Library Lobby.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

This course will explore documentary film approaches that call into question the traditional categories of “fiction” and “documentary”: hybrid films, documentary re-enactments, improvisational fictions, narrative provocations, performative documentaries, etc. Students will be able to identify the origins of film works that mix documentary and fictional film approaches, and some of their most remarkable examples, as well as evaluate how these techniques advance and/or hinder the documentary project. Students will be required to develop a short film proposal that uses “docufictional” approaches. Classes will be composed of lectures, critical viewing and discussion of screenings.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the origins of film works that mix documentary and fictional film techniques.
- Identify some of the most remarkable approaches used in so-called docu-fiction films.
- Evaluate and describe how these techniques advance and/or hinder the documentary project.
- Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary trends in form and content by creating meaningful, innovative and contemporary film projects ideas.

REQUIRED MATERIAL

- Articles and other assigned materials will be uploaded to the Canvas site of the course. <https://its.ucsc.edu/canvas/canvas-student.html>
- Film material: **Most** required films are either held at the McHenry Library Digital Scholarship Commons (aka the “Media Center”) or can be streamed via Kanopy (the UCSC library streaming service): <https://www.kanopy.com>. Some films can be found both in Kanopy and in the “Media Center”. Please check the information beside each film title. Numbers in bold are the films Cruzcat call number.

DIFFICULT MATERIAL STATEMENT

In Film and Digital Media courses you will often be assigned films or other material that could contain difficult ideas, uncomfortable language, or graphic depictions of sex or violence. You may, on occasion, find some of the audiovisual materials presented in this course challenging with respect to matters of feelings, beliefs, politics, conflict, intimacy, or the body. Except in the case of medical or religious restrictions on the consumption of particular materials, it will be assumed that you will be present for all screenings. If you have any concerns about “difficult” materials in the course, please check with your instructors ASAP.

ASSESSMENTS

- Attendance (10%)
- Participation (20%)
- Weekly reading responses (30%)
- Final Project: Short-film proposal. (40%)

ATTENDANCE (10%)

Regular attendance in all classes is required. You are expected to arrive on time and remain in class for the entire period scheduled. Due to the participatory nature of the course, it is very difficult to make up for missed class periods. No more than one unexcused absence for the term will be permitted; you can expect significant absences to hurt your course grade, or result in a grade of "F."

PARTICIPATION (20%)

Your participation in class activities and discussions are an essential part of your work, and your grade, for this course. To get a full grade for participation you need to come prepared to class, which means having read/watched the assigned material and be willing to share your views and opinions with the rest of the class. If you find difficult to express your views or talk in public for any reason (sometimes I do) talk to me as soon as possible. You are also required to come to office hours at least once during the course.

WEEKLY READING RESPONSES (30%)

You are requested to write a weekly short response to the homework material assigned (aprox. 250-300 words.) The responses consist on your reflections on one or more of the assigned items, and are due each Tuesday of the course (plus a response due on Thursday June 28.) Reading responses are a way of preparing you for class discussion as well as practicing your writing in a weekly basis. Please upload your responses to the discussion section in canvas on due date no later than 11am.

FINAL PROJECT: SHORT-FILM PROPOSAL (40%)

Using what you learned over the course, develop a short film idea that employs both documentary and fiction techniques. The final project is divided into two different assignments: the submission of a short-film idea (25% of final project grade) and the final short film proposal (75% of final project grade) More details about final project assignment will follow by the end of Week 1. (July 1st)

KEY DATES

Each Tuesday of the course plus Thursday June 28: Reading Responses due.

Sunday July 1: (end of Week 1): Final project prompt published.

Thursday July 12: Short-film Idea due. (Week 3)

Thursday July 27: Final Short-film Proposal due. (Week 5)

SUMMER SESSION ADMINISTRATIVE DEADLINES

Monday July 2: Drop Deadline.

Friday July 13: Withdraw Deadline.

Neither Summer Session nor instructors drop students for non-attendance or non-payment. Students must drop themselves. Dropping results in full tuition reversal/refund. Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund).

For all dates and deadlines, including 'change of grade option' (P/NP) and grades due, here is the summer academic calendar - <https://summer.ucsc.edu/fundamentals/academic-calendar.html>

LATE WORK POLICY

Work turned in late will be penalized a half grade for each day it is late. (i.e. from A to A-; From B+ to B)

GRADING OVERVIEW

- C: work meets basic objectives and is completed satisfactorily.
- B: work is above average and well crafted.
- A: work is excellent, very well crafted, and the concept, content, and form have been worked through several permutations before arriving at the final.
- Incompletes are only granted if a student has a serious and compelling reason for being unable to complete the coursework during the regular period. Incompletes are granted solely at the discretion of the instructor.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Acts of academic misconduct during the course, including plagiarism, can and usually do result in failure of the course, at the sole discretion of the instructor of record. Your case will be reported to the College Provost as per the Academic Integrity guidelines found on the web at:

https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct

UCSC PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

In this class, we abide by the [UCSC Principles of Community](#), so please familiarize yourself with these important principles.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

You will treat each other and your professor with respect and will not do anything that would impede the learning environment of the classroom. Disruptive or threatening behavior will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, use of cell phones, talking during lectures or screenings, sleeping, and/or bothering other students. Students in violation will be asked to leave the classroom. Other disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the policies of the university.

LAPTOP AND MOBILE DEVICE POLICY

Laptops can be a useful tool in the service of teaching and learning, however, I ask that you use them productively and respectfully.

1. Always set up your laptop computer before the beginning of class. Setting up the computer and booting it up can take a few minutes depending on what applications are set to open at startup. Disable computer sound and turn off all other mobile devices before lecture begins.
2. During lecture and classroom discussion, you should not be connected to network resources. To do so invites many distractions - web surfing, email, chats, etc. Chatting or emailing during class is no more acceptable than talking on a cell phone during class time. Additionally, your networked screens are distracting to those sitting near and behind you.
3. You might be asked to close your computer during screenings.
4. If you are found doing anything other than note-taking (or sanctioned network activity) you might be asked to leave the class immediately and will be marked as absent for that day.

DRC ACCOMMODATIONS

The Disability Resources Center reduces barriers to inclusion and full participation for students with disabilities by providing support to individually determine reasonable academic accommodations. If you have questions or concerns about exam accommodations, or any other disability-related matter, please contact the DRC office, located in Hahn 125 or at 831-459-2089 or drc@ucsc.edu.

TITLE IX

The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors.

The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct.

[Information about the Title IX Office](#), the [online reporting link](#), applicable campus [resources](#), reporting responsibilities, the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at titleix.ucsc.edu. The Title IX/Sexual Harassment Office is located at 105 Kerr Hall. In addition to the [online reporting option](#), you can contact the Title IX Office by calling 831-459-2462.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Course evaluations for faculty will be available online for students to complete towards the end of quarter. You will receive a notification in your Slugmail/UCSC email account when online evaluations become available. Please be thoughtful in your responses, as we take these evaluations seriously. Course evaluations help faculty consider ways to improve instruction.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: REENACTMENT AND RECREATION

TUESDAY JUNE 26. GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS.

Introduction to the course

Screening

- *Close-Up* (Abbas Kiarostami, 1990; 98 min.) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/close>

In-class reading

- Rahul Hamid. *Close-up by Abbas Kiarostami*. In *Cinéaste*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (WINTER 2010), pp. 59-61. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41690981>

THURSDAY JUNE 28. DOCUFICTION: AN OLD BUSINESS.

Assignment due:

- ❖ **Reading Response (250-300 words) on Grierson/Steiner/Hurwitz.**

Screening

- *In the Land of War Canoes* (Edward S. Curtis, 1914/1972; 65 min.) (excerpts) **DVD1127**
- *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, 1922; 79 min.) (excerpts) **DVD1666**
- *Native Land* (Leo Hurwitz and Paul Strand, 1942; 79 min.) (excerpts) **VT5426**
- *Land Without Bread* (Luis Buñuel, 1933; 28 min.) **VT34**
- *The War Game* (Peter Watkins, 1965; 48 min.) **DVD7005**

Homework due

- John Grierson, "First Principles of Documentary". In *The Documentary Film Reader: History, Theory, Criticism*. Edited by Jonathan Kahana. New York: Oxford University Press, 217-225.
- Steiner, Ralph and Leo T. Hurwitz. "A New Approach to Film Making." In *The Documentary Film Reader: History, Theory, Criticism*. Edited by Jonathan Kahana. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, 252-255.

WEEK 2: NEOREALISM

TUESDAY JULY 3. HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS.

Assignment due:

- ❖ **Reading Response (250-300 words) on Zavattini/*Bicycle Thieves*.**

Screening

- *Paisan* (Roberto Rossellini, 1946; 127 min.) (excerpts) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/paisan>
- *La Terra Trema* (Luchino Visconti, 1948; 165 min.) (excerpts) **DVD2370**
- *Umberto D* (Vittorio de Sica, 1952; 89 min.) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/umberto-d>

Homework due

- Watch: *Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio de Sica, 1948; 90min.) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/bicycle-thieves>
- Cesare Zavattini, "Some Ideas on the Cinema," in Richard Dyer MacCann (ed), *Film: A Montage of Theories*, 216-228

THURSDAY JULY 5. NEO-NEOREALISM?Screening

- *Putty Hill* (Matt Porterfield, 2010; 91 min.)

Homework due

- Watch: *Stop the Pounding Heart* (Roberto Minervini, 2013; 103 min.) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/stop-pounding-heart>
- Interview with Roberto Minervini. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LvzK3tiTGU>

WEEK 3: REENACTING MEMORY**TUESDAY JULY 10. REENACTMENT, MEMORY AND TRAUMA.****Assignment due:**

- ❖ **Reading Response due (250-300 words) on Lusztig/Fraser/Bradshaw/*The Missing Picture*.**

Screening

- *The Act of Killing* (Joshua Oppenheimer and Anonymous, 2012; 122/159 min.) **DVD9954**

Homework due

- Watch: *The Missing Picture* (Catherine Dussart, Rithy Panh, 2013; 97 min.) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/missing-picture>
- Nick Bradshaw and Rithy Panh. "Memories of Murder: Rithy Panh on The Missing Picture." <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/interviews/memories-murder-rithy-panh-missing-picture>
- Irene Lusztig. "The Fever Dream of Documentary: A Conversation with Joshua Oppenheimer." In *Film Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 2 (Winter 2013), 50-56.
- Nick Fraser. "The Act of Killing: don't give an Oscar to this snuff movie" *The Guardian*. 22. February 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/23/act-of-killing-dont-give-oscar-snuff-movie-indonesia>

THURSDAY JULY 12. VERBATIM: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL MEMORIES.**Assignment due:**

- ❖ **Film Proposal Idea (400-500 words)**

Screening

- *The Arbor* (Clio Barnard, 2010; 94 min.) (excerpts) **DVD9064**
- *It Happened Just Before* (Anja Salomonowitz, 2006; 72 min.)

Homework due

- Michael Tully. "A Conversation With Clio Barnard (THE ARBOR)" Hammer To Nail . 27 April 2011. <http://www.hammertonail.com/interviews/a-conversation-with-clio-barnard-the-arbor/>
- David Cox. "Clio Barnard's The Arbor is out of lip-synch with reality" The Guardian. 25/10/2010. <https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2010/oct/25/clio-barnard-the-arbor-dunbar>

WEEK 4: PROVOKING REALITY?**TUESDAY JULY 17. CINEMA TRUTH AND ETHNOFICTION.****Assignment due:**

- ❖ **Reading Response (250-300 words) on Morin/Rouch.**

Screening

- *Jaguar* (Jean Rouch, 1967; 88 min.) **DVD6753**
- *Colossal Youth* (Pedro Costa, 2006; 155min.) (excerpts) **DVD8078**
- *Moi, Un Noir* (France/Ivory Coast, 1958; 70 min.) (excerpts) **DVD9756**

Homework due

- Watch: *Chronicle of a Summer* (Edgar Morin and Jean Rouch, 1961; 92 min.) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/chronicle-summer>
- Edgar Morin. "Chronicle of a Film" in *The Documentary Film Reader: History, Theory, Criticism*. Edited by Jonathan Kahana. New York: Oxford University Press, 461-472.

THURSDAY JULY 19. WHAT IF...? DOCUMENTARY INTERVENTIONS.Screening

- *Pour la suite du monde* (Michel Brault, Marcel Carrière and Pierre Perrault, 1963; 105 min.) https://www.nfb.ca/film/pour_la_suite_du_monde_en/
- *This is Not a Film* (Jafar Panahi, Motjaba Mirtahmasb, 2011; 80 min.) (excerpts) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/not-film-0>

Homework due

- Steve Thomas. "Whatever Happened to the Social Documentary?" In *Metro Magazine*. No. 134, 134-142. http://diydoco.nfsadl.com/pdf/doc_reading_list/drl_social_doco.pdf

WEEK 5: ACTORS IN THE REAL WORLD**TUESDAY JULY 24. FABRICATION, PERFORMANCE, HUMOR...DOCUMENTARY?****Assignment due:**

- ❖ **Reading Response (250-300 words) on Torchin.**

Screening

- *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* (Larry Charles, 2006; 86 min.) **DVD6603**

Homework due

- Leshu Torchin, "Cultural Learnings of Borat For Make Benefit Glorious Study of Documentary"

THURSDAY JULY 26. PERFORMANCE AS DISCOVERY.
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Assignment due:

- ❖ **Final Project Due: Short Film Proposal.**

Screening

- *Kate plays Christine* (Robert Greene, 2016; 112 minutes) <https://ucsc.kanopy.com/video/kate-plays-christine>