

German 1601H
Fall 2007
2:30-5 Tues., 2:30-3:20 Thurs.
344 Folwell Hall
Film showings: Tuesdays

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11-1 Mon., 11-12 Tues., 221 Fowell Hall
And by appointment

Fleeing Hitler: German and Austrian Filmmakers Between Europe and Hollywood

This course investigates the work done by some famous film directors who first made films in Germany and Austria but later, in the years before World War II, came to Hollywood and made films there: Fritz Lang (1890-1976), Ernst Lubitsch (1892-1947), Douglas Sirk (Detlef Sierck, 1897-1987), Robert Siodmak (1900-1973), and Billy Wilder (1906-2002).

Four of these five artists came to Hollywood after 1933, when the Nazis came to power in Germany. Three of those four left Germany because they were Jewish or of partial Jewish background: Lang, Siodmak, and Wilder; in the case of Sirk, it was because his wife was Jewish. All of them also had political differences with the Nazi regime. Lubitsch had come to Hollywood already in 1922, long before 1933, but because he was Jewish, once the Nazis came to power in 1933, he could not have returned had he wished to do so—indeed, the Nazis had a special hatred for Lubitsch.

The German cinema's loss was the American cinema's gain, as modernist styles and techniques of the German cinema like Expressionism and New Objectivity were fused with American elements to create new, hybrid entities such as the genre we now call “film noir,” the dark crime films of the 1940s and 1950s. The émigré directors also made “anti-fascist films”: feature films that had a political message, supporting the war effort against the Nazis in the 1940s. Their melodramas and comedies were also influential. The legacy of their work in Hollywood lives on not just in contemporary American cinema but in the postwar European cinema, where filmmakers like Rainer Werner Fassbinder in Germany and Jean-Luc Godard in France were strongly influenced by this trans-Atlantic legacy of hybrid genres, styles--and politics.

Because of its focus on these stylistic and political cross-currents in international film history, this course fulfills the **Liberal Education (LE)** requirement for the theme of **International Perspectives (IP)**. We will study these international dynamics by viewing some classic German and American films and learning to analyze them both as cinematic works of art and as cultural texts within larger social and political contexts. We will also examine these methods of analysis, which are important ways in which the field of film studies attempts to make sense of a film in its stylistic and narrative specificity as well as in reference to the cultural and political contexts of the historical era of its production. Thus the course fulfills the LE requirement for the **Arts/Humanities core (AH)**.

Of the seven **Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes** approved by the University Senate on May 3, 2007, this course aims to help students especially with three of the outcomes: to “locate and critically evaluate information” relevant to understanding how films produce meaning; to “understand diverse philosophies and cultures”—in this case, with regard to German and American politics and aesthetics between 1919 and 1959; and to “understand the role of creativity ... and expression” as they are relevant to the way films are made.

First we will watch some of the German films made by these directors and then later some of their American films. The German films we watch will all have English subtitles or intertitles.

Requirements: Students will be assigned readings in a course reader packet—Course Reader Packet No.36, available at Alpha Prints (1407 4th St. SE in Dinkytown). Students will be required to write informal responses of at least half a page to each film we watch as part of a “threaded discussion” on WebVista. Students will also write two short, formal essays, the first a minimum of 2 (typed, double-spaced) pages due October 16, the second a minimum of 3 (typed, double-spaced) pages due November 20; a take-home final essay exam (5-8 typed, double-spaced pages) will be due on December 18 (during finals week).

Grading: participation (includes attendance, group work, and informal group presentations) 20%; WebVista 20%; essays: 35% (first essay: 10%; second essay 25%); final exam 25%. No unexcused absences will be allowed. There will be some opportunities for earning extra credit.

FILM SCHEDULE (note: all film showings will be on Tuesdays)

Week no.:

1. 9/4/07: Farce: Making Fun of Courtship & Marriage--and Class. *The Oyster Princess (Die Austernprinzessin)*. Ernst Lubitsch, Germany, 1919.
2. 9/11: Expressionism/Science Fiction Epic: Class, Gender, and the Modern Age in *Metropolis*. Fritz Lang, Germany, 1927.
3. 9/18: “New Objectivity” and Everyday Life: *People on Sunday (Menschen am Sonntag)*. Directed by: Robert Siodmak, Edgar Unger, & Fred Zinnemann; screenplay by Billy Wilder, Germany, 1929.
4. 9/25: “New Objectivity” and the Crime Film: *M*. F. Lang, Germany, 1931.
5. 10/2: Romance and Race/Ethnicity in Nazi Melodrama: *La Habanera*. Detlef Sierck (later Douglas Sirk), Germany, 1937.
6. 10/9: Politics & Romance: *Ninotchka*. Dir.; E. Lubitsch; screenplay: Billy Wilder, USA, 1939.
7. 10/16: Anti-Fascist Film as Suspense Film/“Film Noir”: *Hangmen Also Die*. F. Lang, USA, 1943.
8. 10/23: Anti-Fascist Film as Comedy: *To Be or Not To Be*. E. Lubitsch, USA 1942.
9. 10/30: “Film Noir”: Sex and Murder. *Double Indemnity*. B. Wilder, USA, 1943.
10. 11/6: “Film Noir”: Sex and Murder. *The Killers*. Robert Siodmak, USA, 1946.
11. 11/13: Sex, Nazis, and Romantic Comedy—in the Rubble of Postwar Berlin: *Foreign Affair*. B. Wilder, USA, 1948.
12. 11/20: “Film Noir”: Sex, Murder, and Corruption. *The Big Heat*. F. Lang, USA, 1953
13. 11/27: Technicolor Melodrama: Gender & Class: *All That Heaven Allows*. Douglas Sirk, USA, 1955.
14. 12/4: Technicolor Melodrama: Gender, Race, & Masquerade. *Imitation of Life*. Douglas Sirk, USA, 1959.
15. 12/11: Comedy: Gangsters, Gender & Masquerade. *Some Like it Hot*. B.Wilder, USA, 1959.

SCHEDULE (all reading assignments due on the date they are listed):

Week 1:

Tues., 9/4: Introduction & First Film Showing: *The Oyster Princess* (E. Lubitsch, Germany, 1918); WebVista response to film due by noon on Thurs. (9/6). (**Note: WebVista responses will always be due by noon on the Thursday after the Tuesday film showing**).

Thurs, 9/6: Reading assignment due in Course **Reader Packet (CRP)**: look over sequence analysis handouts (text 1), and chronologies on German and American history and film history (texts 2 and 3). Discussion of *The Oyster Princess* and introduction to Sequence Analysis.

Week 2:

- 9/11: Discussion of *The Oyster Princess*, continued; read entries in CRP on Lubitsch and on *Oyster Princess* (texts 4-8). Film showing: *Metropolis* (F. Lang, Germany, 1927): WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs., 9/12.
- 9/12: Discussion of *Metropolis*; read texts 9-11 on expressionism, New Objectivity, and modernism; read texts 12-15 on Lang and *Metropolis*.
3. 9/18: Film Showing: *People on Sunday* (R. Siodmak, B. Wilder, Germany 1929); those who can't read German will need to read translated intertitles—see text 22 in CRP. WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs., 9/20
- 9/20: Discussion of *People on Sunday*; read texts 17-21 on Siodmak and Wilder; read texts 22-24 on the film.
4. 9/25: Film Showing: *M* (F. Lang, Germany 1931); WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 9/27).
- 9/28: Discussion of *M*; read texts 25-27 on the film.
5. 10/2: Film Showing: *La Habanera* (D. Sierck/Sirk, Germany 1937); WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 10/5/
- 10/5: Discussion of *La Habanera*; read texts 28-31 on Sierck/Sirk and this film.
6. 10/9: Film showing: *Ninotchka* (Lubitsch, USA 1939); WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 10/11.
- 10/12: Discussion of *Ninotchka*, read text 32 on the film.
7. 10/16: **Essay 1 due**;
- Film showing: *Hangmen Also Die* (F. Lang, Germany, USA 1943); WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 10/18.
- 10/18: Discussion of *Hangmen Also Die*; read texts 33-34 on the film.
8. 10/23: Film showing: *To Be or Not To Be* (Lubitsch, USA 1942); WebVista response due by noon, Thurs. 10/25.
- 10/25: Discussion of *To Be or Not To Be*; read texts 35-37 on the film..
9. 10/30: Film showing: *Double Indemnity* WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs., 11/1.
- 11/1: Discussion of *Double Indemnity*; read text on film noir plus texts on film, 38-42.
10. 11/6: Film Showing *The Killers* (R. Siodmak, USA 1946); WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 11/8.
- 11/8: Discussion of *The Killers*; read texts 43-44 on the film.
11. 11/13: Film showing: *Foreign Affair* (B. Wilder, USA 1948); WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 11/15.

- 11/15: Discussion of *Foreign Affair*; read texts 45-48 on the film. .
12. 11/20: **Essay 2 due;**
Film showing: *The Big Heat* (F. Lang, USA 1953); WebVista response to film due by noon, Tues. 11/27.
11/22: **Thanksgiving Holiday**
13. 11/27: Discussion of *The Big Heat*; read texts 49-50 on the film;
Film Showing: *All That Heaven Allows*; WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 11/29.
14. 12/4: Film Showing: *Imitation of Life* (D. Sirk, USA 1959); WebVista response to film due by noon, Thurs. 12/6
12/6: Discussion of *Imitation of Life*; read texts 53-54 on the film.
15. 12/11: Final Class: Course Summary;
Film Showing: *Some Like It Hot* (B. Wilder, USA, 1959); WebVista response to film due by noon, Tues. 12/18. Read texts 55-56 on the film.
16. Exam week:
12/18: Take-home essay exam due; must be turned in to GSD office (205 Folwell) by 4:00 PM.

MORE SPECIFICS ON REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

1. **WebVISTA:** Every student will post her or his response to the week's film on the WebVista site for our course by noon on Monday after the film showing on Friday afternoon. The response should be a minimum of half a page. To encourage you to develop your ideas without worrying about a grade, these responses will not be graded—unless you don't respond at all, in which case you will get an F for that week. Since this is the "threaded discussion" feature of WebVista, it would be nice if real discussions of the films developed; therefore, students will get some extra credit if they post more than one response—in other words, if they actually respond to other people's ideas about the film as well. To post your response to a film, go to **WebVista.umn.edu** (you don't even need to type "www"). You must do so using your university e-mail account. Follow the instructions for "Site Log In"; you can also do this by going to your "MyU portal." All the courses for which you are registered should appear; select this course and then click on the icon for "discussions." You may find that it is better to compose your response first in Word or some other word-processing program and then paste it into WebVista—this way if something odd happens on WebVista (which does now and then happen) your response won't be lost.
2. **Reserve book:** for those of you who want more background in film style and analysis, Bordwell & Thompson's **Film Art: An Introduction** is on reserve at the Reserve center in the basement of Wilson Library on the West Bank. For a **general orientation to the University of Minnesota Libraries**, start at the website www.lib.umn.edu. From there you can go to MNCAT, the catalog of all materials owned by the U of MN libraries, or to Research Guides, from where you can go to Research Quickstart, which can help you with research projects. From Research Guides you can even go to an Assignment Calculator, which can help you develop a schedule for your writing assignments. To find out about workshops for learning about using the library, go to www.lib.umn.edu/research/index.phtml#workshops.
3. **Films:** video or DVD copies of each film we watch will be placed on reserve in Walter Library through the Learning Resource Center no later than a week after we watch the film. The copies will be on reserve at the Walter basement Circulation/Reserve Desk; viewing stations will be in Room 208 in Walter.

Attending the film showings in class on Tuesdays is required; the films are available in Walter so that you can watch a film again, for instance, in order to review it or a segment of it in order to write one of the papers for the course. (When writing about a film, it is often useful to watch it again; when doing a detailed sequence analysis of a film as the basis of an essay on the film, it is essential to watch the film again and to watch the sequence to be analyzed a number of times.)
4. **Help with writing:** The Student Writing Center provides walk-in assistance with all aspects of writing. It is located in the ground floor of Nicholson Hall. Hours are generally 9 to 4 Mondays through Thursdays and 9 to 2 on Fridays; for updated hours call 612-625-1893 or visit the website: <http://swc.umn.edu/>. Another resource is the Online Writing Center: <http://www.agricola.umn.edu/owc/>.

**POLICIES ON GRADING STANDARDS,
WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

UNIVERSITY GRADING STANDARDS

A – achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B – achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C – achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

D – achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

S – achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better (achievement required for an S is at the discretion of the instructor but may be no lower than a C-).

F (or N) – Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (see also I)

I – (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F or N for the entire course.

CREDITS AND WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS:

For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. For example, a student taking a three credit course that meets for three hours a week should expect to spend an additional six hours a week on coursework outside the classroom.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Any student with a documented disability condition (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the instructor and Disability Services – (612) 626-1333 – at the beginning of the semester.

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McCormick
Fall 2007

Course Reader Packet (CRP): Contents

A. Film analysis

Text number:

1. McCormick: a) Sequence Analysis Worksheet, and b) Writing an Essay Based on a Sequence Analysis (one option for writing an essay for this course, better for the longer essay, that is, the second one).

B. Social history/Film history

2. McCormick, Chronology in U.S. Social/Political and Film History
3. McCormick, Chronology in German Social/Political and Film History. In *Gender and German Cinema: Feminist Interventions*, Vols. 1 & 2, eds. Sandra Frieden, R. McCormick, et al. Providence: Berg, 1993. 279-85

C. Biographical information on the film directors; entries on modernism, expressionism, and film noir; articles on individual films

4. Biographical entry on Ernst Lubitsch in Katz, 739-40.
5. Prologue to Scott Eyman, *Ernst Lubitsch: Laughter in Paradise*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993. 11-18.
6. Excerpt on *The Oyster Princess* from Eyman, 58-60.
7. Excerpt on *The Oyster Princess* in Sabine Hake, *Passions and Deceptions: The Early Films of Ernst Lubitsch*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992. 84-94.
8. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *Oyster Princess*.
9. Definition of Expressionism from Katz.. 397-98.
10. "New Objectivity." From McCormick, Richard W. *Gender and Sexuality in Weimar Modernity: Film, Literature, and "New Objectivity"*. New York: Palgrave, 2001. 7-9.
11. McCormick: Handout on Modernity & Modernism.
12. Biographical entry on Fritz Lang in Katz, 686-88.

13. Prologue to Patrick McGilligan, *Fritz Lang: The Nature of the Beast*. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. 1-2.
14. Andreas Huyssen, "The Vamp and the Machine," chapter on *Metropolis* in his book *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. 65-81.
15. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *Metropolis*.
16. Biographical entry on Robert Siodmak in Katz, 1062.
17. Chapters 1 & 2 in Deborah Lazaroff Alpi's book *Robert Siodmak*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1998. 9-17.
18. Biographical entry on Billy Wilder in Katz, 1234-35.
19. Introduction to Richard Armstrong, *Billy Wilder, American Film Realist*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2000. 1-7.
20. "Billy Wilder: Moviemaking as Transnational Modernism," by Lary May in *Austrian Studies Newsletter*, Fall 2002: 10-11, 15.
21. Chronology in Bernard F. Dick, *Billy Wilder*. New York: Da Capo, 1996.
22. *People on Sunday*: German intertitles and English translation (by Leo Riegert and Rick McCormick).
23. Chapters 3 & 4 on *People on Sunday* in Alpi, 18-27.
24. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *People on Sunday*.
25. Excerpt on *M*, Peter Lorre, and Lang's relation to Nazism in McGilligan, 147-58.
26. Excerpt from Anton Kaes, *M*. London: British Film Institute, 2000. 6-38.
27. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *M*.
28. Biographical entry on Douglas Sirk/Detlef Sierck in Katz, 1062.
29. Jan Halliday's 1997 Introduction to *Sirk on Sirk: Conversations with Jon Halliday*. London: Faber & Faber, 1971 (first edition), 1997. 1-8.
30. Eric Rentschler's Chapter on *La Habanera* in his book *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and Its Afterlife*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996. 125-45.
31. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *La Habanera*.

32. Chapter on *Nintochka* in William Paul, *Ernst Lubitsch's American Comedy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983. 190-224.
33. Gerd Gemünden, "Brecht in Hollywood: *Hangmen Also Die* and the Anti-Nazi Film." In *The Drama Review* 43.4 (T164), Winter 1999: 65-76.
34. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *Hangmen Also Die*.
35. Eyman on Lubitsch's *To Be or Not To Be*, 299-305.
36. Gerd Gemünden, "Space Out of Joint: Ernst Lubitsch's *To Be or Not To Be*." *New German Critique* 89 (Spring-Summer 2003): 59-80.
37. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *To Be or Not To Be*.
38. Entry on "film noir" in Katz, 418.
39. Chapter on *Double Indemnity* in Charlotte Chandler, *Nobody's Perfect: Billy Wilder, A Personal Biography*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 2002. 114-22.
40. Bernard Dick on *Double Indemnity*. 42-50.
41. Excerpt on *Double Indemnity* in James Naremore's *More Than Night: Film Noir in Its Contexts*. Berkeley: U California Press, 1998. 81-95.
42. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *Double Indemnity*.
43. Alpi on *The Killers*. 152-62.
44. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *The Killers*.
45. Chandler on *Foreign Affair*. 136-41.
46. Bernard Dick on *Foreign Affair*. 63-66.
47. Gerd Gemünden, "Amidst the Ruins of Berlin: *A Foreign Affair*." Paper prepared for the German Studies Symposium at the University of Texas, March 31-April 2, 2006.
48. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *Foreign Affair*.
49. Chapter on *The Big Heat* in James Harvey's book *Movie Love in the Fifties*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001. 104-116.
50. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *The Big Heat*.

51. Chapter on *All That Heaven Allows* in Michael Stern, *Douglas Sirk*. Boston: Twayne, 1979. 111-123..
52. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *That Heaven Allows*
53. Harvey on *Imitation of Life*, 394-423.
54. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *Imitation of Life*.
55. Armstrong on *Some Like it Hot*. 88-97.
56. McCormick: Summary of Issues in *Some Like It Hot*.