

FILM 308 Contemporary Debates in Cinema of Aotearoa

New Zealand

Trimester 1 2015

2 March to 1 July 2015

20 Points



Bad Taste (Jackson, 1988)

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 2 March to 5 June 2015

Easter/Mid-Trimester break: 3 to 19 April 2015

Last assessment item due: 2 June 2015

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Screenings:	Monday	14:10 - 17:00	Hugh Mackenzie	HMLT104
Lectures:	Tuesday	14:10 - 16:00	Murphy	MYLT220

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the FILM 308 site on Blackboard: go to “Tutorial Sign Up” and then follow the instructions under the “S-Cubed Log In” link. Please read the instructions carefully. Tutorial rooms will be listed on S-Cubed, Blackboard and on the noticeboard outside the administration office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:	Dr Alfio Leotta
Email:	alfio.leotta@vuw.ac.nz
Phone:	04 463 6520
Room:	312, 83 Fairlie Tce
Office Hours:	TBA

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be posted on Blackboard.

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

PRESCRIPTION

This course involves an advanced study of the cinema of Aotearoa New Zealand with an emphasis on contemporary critical debates. In 2015 the course will focus on the Cinema of Peter Jackson. The examination of Peter Jackson’s work and career will offer a rich case study and contribute to current debates regarding the following issues: The relationship between New Zealand cinema and global Hollywood; The global dispersion of film production; The relationship between film authorship and industrial modes of production; The redefinition of genre conventions; The impact of the creative industries on the construction of national identity; New developments in film technology.

COURSE CONTENT

The course will survey the evolution of Jackson’s career from director of cult splatstick movies such as *Meet the Feebles* (1989) and *Braindead* (1992) to entrepreneur responsible for the foundation of companies such as Wingnut Films and Weta Workshop, and finally to producer and director of mega blockbuster projects such as *The Lord of the Rings* (2001-2003) and *The Hobbit* (2012-2013). The course will combine the examination of the social, cultural and economic factors that favoured Jackson’s commercial and artistic success, with an in-depth analysis of his films. In this course the examination of Jackson’s work and career engages with a number of current debates in film studies. In particular, the cinema of Peter Jackson offers a rich case study to better understand a number of topical issues including the global dispersion of film

production; the relationship between film authorship and industrial modes of production; and the impact of new developments in film technology.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course *should* be able to:

- 1 engage with and apply critical and theoretical perspectives appropriate to contemporary scholarly debates about New Zealand cinema (with particular reference to the work and career of Peter Jackson);
- 2 characterise and evaluate relevant scholarly texts;
- 3 demonstrate enhanced critical and research skills;
- 4 demonstrate advanced skills in argumentation and written expression.

TEACHING FORMAT

The course is taught through lectures, screenings, tutorials, and set readings. Teaching provides a cultural, historical and critical context for each session. You are expected to attend all lectures, screenings and tutorials. The tutorials offer the opportunity for further discussion of the theories and concepts covered each week. You will need to complete the readings set for each week before the tutorials.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass-mark of 50%, students must:

- submit all pieces of assessment mentioned below, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as stated for late submission of work)
- attend at least 8 of the 11 tutorials.

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20-point course is 200 hours over the trimester. In addition to spending around 48 hours attending lectures and tutorials, you should spend approximately 52 hours on reading, preparing for tutorials, and reflecting on lectures. The remaining 100 hours should be spent preparing for and working on assignments (for example, an assignment worth 25% should take a minimum of 25 hours). The exact times spend on such activities will vary depending on your personal needs. Preparation for assignments should take place a number of weeks in advance of the due dates.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Research Essay Proposal (1000 words)	15%	1, 2, 3, 4	26 March
2	Research Essay (3000-3500 words)	45%	1, 2, 3, 4	8 May
3	Take Home Assignment (2000 words)	40%	1, 2, 3, 4	5 June

Assignment One: Research Proposal for Research Essay (15%)**Due Date: Week 4 - Thursday 26 March 4pm****Length: 1000 words including bibliography****Description:**

This assignment will allow you to develop a research proposal for your Research Essay about the Cinema of Peter Jackson. The proposal will focus on a topic of your choice. As part of this assignment you will formulate:

1. A research question.
2. A brief overview of the project.
3. The methodology you will use.
4. An initial bibliography with a minimum of 10 sources.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner.
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in class.
- The originality and quality of your findings. This will include your ability to conduct independent research from reputable academic sources.
- Coherency, structure and argumentation of your proposal.
- Quality and fluency of your expression.
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts.
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography.

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will improve your knowledge of the conceptual arguments surrounding the Cinema of Peter Jackson. It will enable you to develop your skills at independent research. It will also enhance your written skills.

Assignment Two: Research Essay (45%)

Length: 3000-3500 words

Due Date: Week 8 – Friday 8 May 4pm

Description:

This will be a research/critical essay that deals with the topic developed in your Research Proposal.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner.
- Clear evidence of your engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 308.
- The originality and quality of your findings. This will include your ability to conduct independent research from reputable academic sources, synthesise research materials, engage in textual analysis, and develop and express your ideas.
- Coherency, structure and argumentation of your essay.
- Quality and fluency of written expression.
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography.

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will improve your knowledge of one of the topics studied in the course. It will enable you to develop your textual analysis, independent research, critical and argumentation skills. It will also improve your written expression.

Assignment 3: Take Home Assignment (2000 words)

Weighting: 40%

Length: 2000 words

Due Date: Week 12 - Friday 5 June 4pm

Description:

The script for the take home test will be posted on Blackboard at the beginning of week 12. The take home test will be divided in two parts. Part I will have short answer questions about the whole course. Part II will have a short essay about topics covered in the last part of the course.

Assessment criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, complete, direct, original and relevant manner.
- Understanding and articulation of course issues in a critical fashion.

- Correct responses to questions
- Argumentation and essay structure
- Quality and fluency of your expression

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment relates to the learning objectives that ask you to consider the issues explored throughout the course. It will enable you to develop your knowledge of New Zealand cinema (with specific reference to the Cinema of Peter Jackson) as well as your critical argumentation skills. It will also improve your written expression.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin. Follow the instructions provided in the “Assignments and Turnitin” section of Blackboard.

Hardcopy assignments are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: 83 Fairlie Terrace. Attach an assignment cover sheet or extension form, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office. Remember to fill in your tutor’s name.

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your tutor in tutorials or during their office hours. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the Administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the Administration office.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Monday 15 June 2015.**

Penalties

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day (weekends will count as one work day). Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

SET TEXTS

See page 8 of the Course Outline for the list of compulsory readings and screenings.

These readings as well as additional resources will be made available on Blackboard or on closed reserve in the library.

RECOMMENDED READING

A list of recommended readings as well as additional resources are available on Blackboard.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:
www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1 02/03 Introduction to Peter Jackson and the Cinema of Aotearoa New Zealand

Week 2 09/03 The Early Years and NZFC

Week 3 16/03 The King of 'Splatstick'

Week 4 23/03 Birth of a Film Auteur ASSIGNMENT 1 RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Week 5 30/03 Collaborative Relationships

Easter/Mid Trimester Break: Friday 3 to Sunday 19 April 2015

Week 6 20/04 Weta: The Rise of a Film Empire

Week 7 27/04 The Frodo Franchise (NO SCREENING)

Week 8 04/05 Landscape and Race ASSIGNMENT 2 RESEARCH ESSAY

Week 9 11/05 Fantasy and Technology

Week 10 18/05 Wellywood

Week 11 25/05 Return to Middle Earth

Week 12 01/06 Conclusions - Peter Jackson: Auteur as Entrepreneur (NO SCREENING)
ASSIGNMENT 3 TAKE HOME ASSIGNMENT

Week 1	Introduction: Peter Jackson and the Cinema of Aotearoa New Zealand
Screening	<i>Bad Taste</i> (1988)
Lecture	Introduction to the course; Overview of the Cinema of Aotearoa New Zealand
Readings	Stephenson, Matthew. "Senses of Cinema – Peter Jackson." N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Nov. 2013. http://sensesofcinema.com/2008/great-directors/peter-jackson Grant, Barry Keith. "Bringing It All Back Home: The Films of Peter Jackson." <i>New Zealand Filmmakers</i> . Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007. 320–335. Horrocks, Roger. "A Small Room with Large Windows." <i>New Zealand Film: An Illustrated History</i> . Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2011: 1-29.

Week 2	The Early Years and NZFC
Screening	<i>Meet the Feebles</i> (1990)
Lecture	Guest Lecture: Lindsay Shelton
Readings	Shelton, Lindsay. "All I want to do is Make Movies." <i>The Selling of New Zealand Movies</i> . Wellington: Awa Press, 2005: 88-97. Pryor, Ian. "Meet Your Creature Feature." Woods, Paul A., ed. <i>Peter Jackson: From Gore to Mordor</i> . London: Plexus, 2004: 29-35.

Week 3	The King of Splatstick
Screening	<i>Braindead</i> (1992)
Lecture	Intertextuality and Genre blending in the Cinema of Peter Jackson
Readings	McDonald, Lawrence. "A Critique of the Judgement of Bad Taste or Beyond Braindead Criticism: The Films of Peter Jackson." <i>Illusions</i> 21-22.Winter (1993): 9–15. Leotta, Alfio. "From Comic-Gothic to 'Splatstick': Black Humour in New Zealand Cinema." <i>World Directory of Cinema: Australia and New Zealand</i> . Ed. Ben Goldsmith and Geoff Lealand. Vol. 1. Bristol: Intellect Books, 2010: 296–303.

Week 4	The Birth of a Film Auteur
Screening	<i>Heavenly Creatures</i> (1994)
Lecture	Style and Themes

Readings	<p>Wu, Harmony H. "Trading in Horror, Cult and Matricide: Peter Jackson's Phenomenal Bad Taste and New Zealand Fantasies of Inter/national Cinematic Success." <i>Defining Cult Movies: The Cultural Politics of Oppositional Taste</i>. Ed. Mark Jancovich. New York: Manchester University Press, 2003: 84–108.</p> <p>Morris, Jo. "Peter Jackson as Auteur." <i>The Cinema of Australia and New Zealand</i>. Ed. Geoff Mayer and Keith Beattie. London: Wallflower, 2007: 45–51.</p> <p>Creed, Barbara. "Bad Taste and Antipodal Inversion: Peter Jackson's Colonial Suburbs." <i>Postcolonial Studies</i> 3.1 (2000): 61–68.</p>
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Week 5	Collaborative Relationships
Screening	<i>Forgotten Silver</i> (1995)
Lecture	Guest Lecture: TBA
Readings	<p>Conrich, Ian, and Roy Smith. "Fool's Gold: New Zealand's Forgotten Silver, Myth and National Identity." <i>British Review of New Zealand Studies</i> 9.2 (1998): 57–65.</p> <p>Jutel, Thierry. "Peter Jackson's Cinema and Colin McKenzie's Legacy." <i>Studying the Event Film: The Lord of the Rings</i>. Ed. Harriet Elaine Margolis and Thierry Jutel. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008: 100–107.</p>

**** MID-TRIMESTER BREAK ** MID-TRIMESTER BREAK ****

Week 6	Weta: The Rise of a Film Empire
Screening	<i>The Frighteners</i> (1996)
Lecture	
Readings	<p>Finlay, Steven. Weta Ltd: A Case Study. Competitive Advantage New Zealand: Report. March 2006. http://www.victoria.ac.nz/som/researchprojects/research-projects/competitive-advantage/documents/weta_case_study.pdf</p>

Week 7	The 'Frodo Franchise'
Screening	NO SCREENING
Lecture	The Historical, Cultural and Economic Significance of <i>The Lord of the Rings</i>
Readings	<p>Thompson, Kristin. "Fantasy, Franchises, and Frodo Baggins: The Lord of the Rings and Modern Hollywood." <i>The Velvet Light Trap</i>, 52 (2003): 45-63.</p>

Jones, Deborah, and Karen Smith. "Middle-Earth Meets New Zealand: Authenticity and Location in the Making of The Lord of the Rings*." *Journal of Management Studies* 42.5 (2005): 923–945.

Week 8	Landscape and Race
Screening	<i>King Kong</i> (2005)
Lecture	The Analysis of Landscape and Race in Peter Jackson's work
Readings	<p>Kavka, Misha, and Stephen Turner. "'This Is Not New Zealand': An Exercise in the Political Economy of Identity." <i>Studying the Event Film: The Lord of the Rings</i>. Ed. Harriet Elaine Margolis and Thierry Jutel. New York: Manchester University Press, 2008: 230–238.</p> <p>Jutel, Thierry. "Lord of the Rings: Landscape, Transformation, and the Geography of the Virtual." <i>Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space, and Place</i>. Ed. Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman. Auckland: Oxford University Press, Incorporated: 2004. 54–65.</p>

Week 9	Fantasy and Technology
Screening	<i>The Lovely Bones</i> (2009)
Lecture	The Analysis of Fantasy and Technology in Peter Jackson's work
Readings	<p>Thompson, Kirsten Moana. "Scale, Spectacle and Movement: Massive Software and Digital Special Effects in The Lord of the Rings." <i>From Hobbits to Hollywood: Essays on Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings</i>. Ed. Ernest Mathijs and Murray Pomerance. Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2006. 283-299. Print.</p> <p>TBA</p>

Week 10	Wellywood
Screening	<i>The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn</i> (2011)
Lecture	Wellington and the Globalisation of Film Production
Readings	<p>Leotta, Alfio, and Tom O'Regan. "Wellington and Auckland as Australasian Media Cities." <i>Studies in Australasian Cinema</i> 8.2 (2014): 96-109</p> <p>Leotta, Alfio. "Small Nations and Global Dispersal of Film Production: A</p>

Comparative Analysis of the Film Industries in New Zealand and the UAE”

Polecom, 2.2 (2015): 20-35.

Week 11	Return to Middle Earth
Screening	TBA
Lecture	The Hobbit Franchise and Film-Tourism
Readings	<p>Haworth, Nigel. “A Political Economy of 'The Hobbit' Dispute”. <i>New Zealand Journal of Employment Relations</i>, 36. 3 (2011): 97-106.</p> <p>Goh, Robbie. “The Lord of the Rings and New Zealand: Fantasy Pilgrimages, Imaginative Transnationalism and the Semiotics of the (Ir)real. <i>Social Semiotics</i> 24.3 (2014): 263-282.</p>

Week 12	Conclusions
Screening	NO SCREENING
Lecture	Peter Jackson: Auteur as Entrepreneur
Readings	<p>Botes, Costa. “Made in New Zealand: The Cinema of Peter Jackson.” <i>NZEDGE</i>. N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Nov. 2013. www.nzedge.com/peter-jackson</p> <p>NZOnScreen. “NZ On Screen - Peter Jackson.” N.p., 21 Aug. 2008. Web. 11 Jan. 2015. www.nzonscreen.com/person/peter-jackson/biography</p>