

FILM 407 Studies in Film Genre

Trimester 1 2015

2 March to 1 July 2015

30 Points



Photo taken by Thierry Jutel

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 2 March to 5 June 2015

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

Last assessment item due: Friday 5 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:

Tuesdays 10:00 - 11:50 85 Fairlie Tce FT85108

Seminars:

Wednesdays 10:00 - 11:50 85 Fairlie Tce FT85108

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:

Dr Thierry Jutel

thierry.jutel@vuw.ac.nz

Phone: 463 9737

Room: 107, 85 Fairlie Terrace

Office hours: Wednesdays noon to 1pm and by appointment

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

An advanced study of a particular film genre or genres. In 2015, the course will focus on cinematic badlands. Badlands are landscapes and mediascapes associated with foreboding or desolate spaces which bear the mark of real or imaginary historical or future disasters. They work as locations and backdrops for stories about lost souls and haunted lands whose respective histories converge. We will discuss the ways in which badlands function as terminal, liminal, and/or transitional spaces in the context of narratives of settler colonisation. This course will draw on diverse examples from genres such as the Western, the road movie, and the war film, and from different periods and production contexts.

COURSE CONTENT

Badlands work as locations and backdrops for stories about lost souls and haunted lands whose respective histories converge. Recurring images include the scorched desert and the empty road; the chase and the hideout; the stylised treatment of death and suicide sometimes shown as sacrifice; and moments of contemplation, reflection and hallucination. The visual tropes have been extended to other spaces such as post-industrial, urban and environmental wastelands. We will discuss the ways in which badlands function as terminal, liminal, and/or transitional spaces in the context of narratives of settler colonisation.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. relate the use of landscape in a variety of films and contexts to broader socio-historical issues;

2. consider aesthetic, stylistic, narrative, and generic conventions and usage in relation to the role of landscape in cinema;
3. demonstrate an understanding of the visual and narrative tropes associated with cinematic badlands;
4. devise projects which creatively engage with the visual and narrative tropes associated with cinematic badlands;
5. demonstrate an ability to analyse the relation between the scholarship in the field of cinema studies, specifically relating to landscape, critical theory, and film examples;
6. develop research questions and research projects;
7. present research outcomes in written and oral forms.

TEACHING FORMAT

The course will be organised around weekly screenings and weekly seminars where student participation will be essential.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

- submit the essays and assignments, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work).

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30-point course is 300 hours over the trimester or 20 hours per teaching week.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Critical essay 2000-2500 words	25%	1, 2,3, 5, 7	2 April
2	Creative/critical analysis of a badland: project and presentation (20 minutes)	20%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	4 May
3	Research proposal 750-1000 words	10%	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	21 May
4	Research essay 3500-4000 words	45%	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	5 June

Assessment is 100% internal.

1. **Critical Essay.** This assignment will cover material from weeks 1 to 5. Students will organise their essay around a comparative analysis of at least 2 films drawn from the list of compulsory or recommended screenings and with reference to the critical literature introduced in the course. All essays will be due on 2 April, no later than 2pm.
2. **Creative/Critical analysis of a badland.** In this reflexive exercise, students are to produce a creative/essayistic text featuring a cinematic badland and present it in class on Wednesday 4 May. The form of the presentation is open.

Students **must** discuss their plans with the course coordinator. They must consider the availability and access to visual and technical resources required to complete the project.

The purpose of the exercise will be to develop an understanding of badlands through an engagement with their iconography and aesthetics. Students are invited to draw material from existing work (film, photography, aural and visual media, visual arts, literature...). The outcomes of this exercise will be in 2 distinct parts:

- a. a created "text" in the form of edited clips, slide shows, web-based montage or any other form agreed upon with the course coordinator.
 - b. a presentation in class with discussion.
3. **Research proposal.** In the last part of the course, students will devise a research project for which they will perform a literature search and formulate a research question. Research proposals are due on 21 May, no later than 2pm. Proposals will be assessed and returned no later than 25 May. Detailed instructions are available on Blackboard.
 4. **Research essay.** After receiving feedback on their research proposal, students will then complete the research essay. Due 5 June, no later than 2pm.

Marking Criteria for Assignment 2

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in class
- Originality and quality of your critical/creative analysis. This will include your ability to conduct independent research from a range of visual, aural, cinematic, and media sources
- An ability to choose examples which illustrate, foreground and reveal some of the characteristics of cinematic badlands
- A form of creative work which suits the purpose of the presentation
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography

Marking Criteria for Assignments 1, 3, 4

- 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 work
- 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

Please note: Marks for Honours level assignments and final course grades are not finalised until feedback from the external examiner has been considered. Honours grades gained in individual courses remain provisional until the overall final classification made by the Honours programme examination committee.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin, the online plagiarism prevention tool.

Each assignment is submitted in the following ways:

- Send a word document version of your essay to thierry.jutel@vuw.ac.nz with a cover sheet (available on Blackboard) in the front and in the same document.
- Email a copy your assignment as a MS Word file to film@vuw.ac.nz

Your marked assignment will be emailed back by your course coordinator.

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 Wednesday 1 July 2015.**

Penalties

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

SET TEXTS

A list of compulsory readings and screenings will be available on Blackboard. Material will be available on line 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

Week of 2 March

Landscape and Cinema 1

Screening

Gerry, Gus Van Sant 2002 (103 min)

Reading

Lefebvre, Martin. "On Landscape in Narrative Cinema". *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 20.1 (Spring 2011): 61-78.

McKinney, David. "Gerry". *Film Quarterly*. 57. 2 (Winter 2003-2004): 43-47.

Recommended Reading

Andrews, Malcolm. "Land into Landscape." *Landscape and Western Art*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999: 1-24.

Sitney, P. Adams. "Landscape in the Cinema". *Landscape, natural beauty and the arts*. Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (eds). Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1993: 103-126.

Recommended Screening

Paris, Texas. Wim Wenders (1984)

Week 2

Week of 9 March

Landscape and Cinema 2

Screening

Badlands, Terrence Malick 1973 (93 min)

<http://victoria.lconz.ac.nz/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=1056935>

Reading

Lefebvre, Martin. "Between Setting and Landscape in the Cinema" in *Landscape and Film*. Martin Lefebvre, ed. New York: Routledge, 2006: 19-59.

Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces" *Diacritics* 16:1 (1986): 22-27.

Also:

<http://foucault.info/documents/heterotopia/foucault.heterotopia.en.html>

Recommended readings:

Jutel, Thierry. "No Country for Old Men, Visual Regime, Mental Image and Narrative Slowness". *Senses of Cinema* 60 (October 2011)

www.sensesofcinema.com/2011/feature-articles/no-country-for-old-men-visual-regime-mental-image-and-narrative-slowness/

Week 3

Week of 16 March

Wilderness, desert, badlands and terminal spaces of cinema

Screening

Camera Natura, Ross Gibson, 1984 (32 min); and *Walkabout*, Nicolas Roeg 1971 (95 min)

<http://victoria.lconz.ac.nz/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=1496595>

Reading

Gibson, Ross. *Seven Versions of an Australian Badland* (excerpts). St Lucia: Queensland University Press, 2002

Recommended Reading

Rekhari, Suneeti (2008). 'The "Other" in Film: Exclusions of Aboriginal Identity from Australian Cinema'. *Visual Anthropology* 21:2: 125-135.

Lambert, Anthony and Catherine Simpson. "Jindabyne's Haunted Alpine Country: Producing (an) Australian Badland". *M/C Journal* 11.5 (2008) <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/viewArticle/81/0>

Simpson, Catherine. "Antipodean Automobility and Crash: Treachery, Trespass and Transformation of the Open Road". *Australian Humanities Review* September 2006: 39-40.

www.australianhumanitiesreview.org/archive/Issue-September-2006/simpson.html

Recommended screening

Jindabyne. Ray Lawrence (2007)

<http://victoria.lconz.ac.nz/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=1096742>

The Proposition. John Hillcoat (2005)

Week 4

Week of 23 March

Landscape, Badlands and Settler Colonialism 1

Screening

Dead Man, Jim Jarmusch, 1995 (115 min)

Reading

Moliterno, Gino. "Dead Man". *Senses of Cinema* (2001) 14. http://sensesofcinema.com/2001/cteq/dead_man/

Veracini, Loirenzo. "Introducing Settler Colonial Studies". *Settler Colonial Studies* (2011) 1: 1-12.

Week 5

Week of 30 March

Landscape, Badlands and Settler Colonialism 2

Screening

Beau Travail, Claire Denis 1999 (90 min)

<http://victoria.lconz.ac.nz/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=1287496>

Reading

Hayward, Susan. "Filming the (Post-)Colonial Landscape: Claire Denis' *Chocolat* (1988) and *Beau Travail* (1998)." *Cinema and Landscape*. Eds. Graeme Harper and Jonathan Rayner. Bristol: Intellect, 2010: 163-175.

Hayward, Susan. "Claire Denis's 'Post-colonial' Films and Desiring Bodies". *L'Esprit Createur* (Fall 2002) 42.3: 39-49.

Recommended Reading

Vicari, Justin. "Colonial fictions: *Le Petit Soldat* and its revisionist sequel, *Beau Travail*" *Jump Cut* (2008) 50.

www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc50.2008/PetitSoldatDenis/index.html

<http://sensesofcinema.com/2009/great-directors/claire-denis/>

<http://sensesofcinema.com/2007/cteq/beau-travail/>

Assignment 1 Due Thursday 2 April no later than 2 pm

Week 6

Week of 20 April

Landscape, Badlands and Settler Colonialism 3

Screening

Breaking Bad (Episode 1)

Reading

Pierson, David. "The Context of *Breaking Bad*". In *Breaking Bad: Critical Essays on the Contexts, Politics, Style, and Reception of the Television Series*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014. Pp 15-31

Riley, Benjamin. "A City in the Desert: Landscape and *Breaking Bad*." I Am the One Who Knocks: The PopMatters *Breaking Bad* Companion. 20th August, 2013. www.popmatters.com/feature/174330-a-city-in-the-desert-landscape-and-breaking-bad/

Week 7

Week of 27 April

Badlands and Film Tourism (Guest lecturer: Alfio Leotta)

Screening

Australia, Baz Luhrmann 2008 (165 min)

Reading

Stadler, Jane & Mitchell, Peta. 'Never-Never Land: Affective landscapes, the touristic gaze and Heterotopic space in Australia'. *Studies in Australasian Cinema*, Vol.4, No.2, 2010: 173-186.

Beeton, Sue. "Popular Media and Tourism". *Film-Induced Tourism*. Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2005: 3-19.

Brégent-Heald, Dominique. "Primitive Encounters: Film and Tourism in the North American West". *The Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Spring, 2007): 47-67.

Week 8

Week of 4 May

Producing a Cinematic Badland: Presentation and discussion

Assignment 2 Due Wednesday 4 May

Week 9

Week of 11 May

Badlands, the environment, and ecological disaster

Screening

Lessons of Darkness, Werner Herzog 1992 (50 min);

<http://victoria.lconz.ac.nz/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibld=86127>

Into Eternity: A Film for the Future, M. Masden 2010 (75 min)

Reading

Ames, Eric. "Herzog, Landscape and Documentary". *Cinema Journal* 48.2 (Winter 2009): 49-69.

Murray, Robin L. and Joseph K. Heumann. "The First Eco-Disaster Film?" *Film Quarterly* 59.3 (Spring 2006): 44-51.

Recommended Screening

Petropolis: Aerial Perspectives on the Alberta Tar Sands, Peter Mettler 2009 (43 min)

Week 10

Week of 18 May

Are there Badlands in Aotearoa-New Zealand?

Screening

TBD

Reading for week 10 and 11

Rayner, Jonathan. "Battlefields of Vision: New Zealand Filmscapes." *Cinema and Landscape*. Eds. Graeme Harper and Jonathan Rayner. Bristol: Intellect, 2010: 255-267.

Wallis, Jillian. "Transformative Landscapes: Postcolonial Representations of Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Tongariro National Parks". *Space and Culture* (2013)

Smith, Jo. "Aotearoa/New Zealand: An unsettled state in a sea of islands." *settler colonial studies* 1.1 (2011): 111-131.

Gurevitch, Leon (2010). "100% pure imperial ecology". *New Zealand Journal of Media Studies* 12 (1), 58-78.

www.nzmediastudies.org.nz/issues.php?issue=07&title=Volume+12+No.1

Assignment 3 Due Thursday 21 May no later than 2 pm

Week 11

Week of 25 May

Urban Badlands

Screening

Manurewa, Sam Peacocke 2011 (18 min)

Reading for week 10 and 11

Rayner, Jonathan. "Battlefields of Vision: New Zealand Filmscapes." *Cinema and Landscape*. Eds. Graeme Harper and Jonathan Rayner. Bristol: Intellect, 2010: 255-267.

Wallis, Jillian. "Transformative Landscapes: Postcolonial Representations of Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Tongariro National Parks". *Space and Culture* (2013)

Smith, Jo. "Aotearoa/New Zealand: An unsettled state in a sea of islands." *settler colonial studies* 1.1 (2011): 111-131.

Gurevitch, Leon (2010). "100% pure imperial ecology". *New Zealand Journal of Media Studies* 12 (1), 58–78.

www.nzmediastudies.org.nz/issues.php?issue=07&title=Volume+12+No.1

Week 12

Week of 1 June

No screening

Individual appointments to discuss research project.

Assignment 4 Due Friday 5 June no later than 2 pm