

FILM 204 Film Histories

Trimester 1 2016

29 February to 29 June 2016

20 Points



The Big Clock (John Farrow, 1948) Paramount Pictures

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 29 February to 5 June 2016

Easter break: 24 to 30 March 2016

Mid-trimester break: 25 April to 1 May 2016

Last assessment item due: June 3

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

The Assessment Handbook can be found at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf>

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Screenings

Tuesday 13.00-16.00

Lectures

Wednesday 13.00-15.00

HMLT104

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the FILM 204 site on Blackboard: go to “Tutorial instructions” and then follow the instructions carefully. Remember to record your tutorial time, day and room for future reference. Tutorial rooms will be listed on myAllocator, Blackboard and on the noticeboard

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Staff: Kirsten Thompson

Email: Kirsten.thompson@vuw.ac.nz

Phone: 04 463 6728

Room: 101, 83 Fairlie Terrace

Office Hours: Tuesdays 9-10

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, YOU MUST set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use. All communications with the class will be via Blackboard and to your Victoria email account. You will also find many recommended and all required readings on pdf there (with the exception of the textbooks).

PRESCRIPTION

This course investigates a specific period or type of film history. It will situate cinema in a particular historical context and examine how historiographical approaches can be applied in Film Studies.

COURSE CONTENT

In 2016 the class will focus on the group of films made between the forties and mid fifties known as “film noir” together with the critical and theoretical debates around them. With complex narrative structures and pessimistic themes, these films range from the heist film to the private eye story, crime melodrama and woman’s picture. They had a striking visual style and continue to exert a powerful influence on contemporary filmmaking. We will look at theoretical and philosophical issues connecting noir to modernity, existentialism and urban space. Titles may include *Gilda*, *Out of the Past*, *The Strange Love of Martha Ivers*, *Double Indemnity*, *Kiss of Death*, *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *Raw Deal*, *T Men*, *The Big Heat*, *The Killers*, *The Hitchhiker*, *Naked City*, *The Big Clock*, *Mildred Pierce*, *Asphalt Jungle*, *Murder My Sweet*.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Have a general knowledge of classical film noir, and critical debates around its definition, aesthetic and formal characteristics, style, narrative structure and periodization.
2. Have specific knowledge of particular subtypes of film noir, including the heist film, the melodrama, semi-documentary noir, gangster film.
3. Have more detailed knowledge of specific critical issues in relation to noir such as existentialism, modernity/modernism and modern art, city spaces, the femme and homme fatale.
4. Communicate rigorous, scholarly arguments based on research in a written and/or oral manner

TEACHING FORMAT

The course will be delivered through a combination of lectures, screenings and tutorials. Tutorials and lectures will involve considerable student participation.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Students may find small flashlights or penlights helpful to take notes during screenings of films (however light from the film's screen is usually visible to see by).

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As completing all assignments is important to fulfill all course learning objectives, in addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, in addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must have:

- Submitted ALL assignments, on or by the specified dates (unless extensions are approved). Failure to complete any specific coursework results in a failure (K) for the class. No assignments will be accepted more than three days after the due date.
- Submitted all assignments both digitally (on Turnitin) and in hard copy form to 83 Fairlie Terrace (front office) **by the due date at 5 pm**. Failure to submit either the digital assignment or hardcopy assignment will result in penalties and **neither will be accepted more than three days after the due date**.
- Attended 7 out of 9 tutorials. Any additional absences must have medical or other documentation. More than 2 absences without such documentation AND the consent of the lecturer will result in a K for the class.

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20 point course is 200 hours over the trimester or 13 hours per teaching week. At least 4 hours per week should be allocated to reading in advance of class. Additional time will need to be budgeted for assignment preparation.

As a guide consider this hour allocation should be:

Class contact hours	12 x 2 lectures 12 X 3 hour screenings	36 hours screenings 24 hours lectures 9 hours tutorials
Class preparation (reading)	4	48 hours
Short paper		10 hours
Midterm Test		30 hours
Short Paper # 2		10 hours
Research essay		33 hours

TOTAL: 200 hours

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and length/durations per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Short Paper on Reading 1500-2000 words	20%	1, 2, 3, 4	March 23
2	Short paper 1000 words	15%	1, 2, 3, 4	April 19
3	Midterm Test (up to 2 hours)	30%	1, 2, 3, 4	May 4
4	Final Essay 2500-3000 words	35%	1, 2, 3, 4	June 3

Assignment One: Short Paper 1500-2000 words (20%) Due Date: 23 March

This assignment will cover topics discussed in the first four weeks of the course, such as the definition and critical formation of the term “film noir”, its historical conditions of production and reception, and thematic and narrative style. You will be required to watch an additional **classic** film noir on your own (from an approved list) and to write an essay discussing how it can be considered noir. All assignments must be submitted electronically to Turnitin AND submitted in physical form to the office at 83 Fairlie Terrace.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and readings discussed in FILM 204
- Clear analysis of the material presented in the articles and film
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in the lectures and readings
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Accurate and complete referencing of the readings

Assignment Two: Short Paper 1000 words (15%); Due Date: April 19

This assignment will require you to discuss the Film Noir detective in one of three assigned films in response to a question drawn from Raymond Chandler’s essay “The Simple Art of Murder” (to be posted on Blackboard). A separate handout on the requirements of the assignment will be on Blackboard.

All assignments must be submitted electronically to Turnitin AND submitted in physical form to the office at 83 Fairlie Terrace by 4 pm April 19

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilling the set task in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and readings discussed in FILM 204
- Clear analysis of the material presented in the articles and film
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in the lectures and readings
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Accurate and complete referencing of the readings

Assignment Three: In class Test (30%) Due Date: May 4

Description:

This test will cover the readings and screenings from Weeks 2-10. You will be expected to answer a series of short/fill in the blank/multiple choice and essay questions. A guide to test preparation will be posted on Blackboard closer to the time.

Assessment Criteria:

- Answering the questions in a clear, direct, relevant and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in lectures, readings and screenings from Weeks 2-10
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- mastery of several more specialized topics such as the historical production context, visual style and themes of film noir

Assignment Four:

Research Essay (35%) 2500-3000 words; Due Date: June 3

This research essay will require you to do original research on a topic relating to Film Noir. The essay should include critical analyses of at least two films to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key films within the wider social, cultural and historical frameworks of Film Noir. You may select a topic of your choice from the specific essay topics that will be posted on Blackboard.

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
- Evidence of textual analysis skills, including argumentation
- Quality and originality of the presentation
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography.

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.

For all assignments both hardcopy and Turnitin digital versions must be submitted by the due date. Hardcopy assignments are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: 83 Fairlie Terrace by 5 pm. Attach an assignment cover sheet or extension form, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office. Remember to fill in your instructor's name.

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your instructor during class. 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 assignments from the Administration office.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted but *must be requested before the due date* (unless documented by exceptional circumstances such as severe illness). To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due.

No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Monday 13 June 2016

Penalties

All assignments are subject to a 2.5 % penalty for each day late **and subject to a maximum of 3 days**. Late work also receives minimal or no comments from your marker.

Issues of workload **do not** constitute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. If you require an extension, you **MUST** complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) **PRIOR** to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

SET TEXTS

Required texts:

Andrew Spicer, *Film Noir* (Longman, 2002, Paperback) AS in syllabus

Additional required readings will also be assigned from time to time and will be made available in PDF form via Blackboard (BLA in syllabus).

You can order textbooks online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz, or alternatively order online at bookdepository.com (with free delivery) or amazon.com

RECOMMENDED READING

Additional recommended readings will be made available to students 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

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php. Student feedback for a previous version of this course has been evaluated and no major issues were raised. The class remains the same.

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
- 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
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf
- 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
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- 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

COURSE OUTLINE

<p>Week 1</p>	<p>March 1 & 2</p>	<p>What is Film Noir? CRITICAL DEBATE</p> <p>Screenings: <i>Detour</i> (Edgar Ulmer, 1946) <i>Documentary on Noir</i> (Scorsese)</p> <p>Reading: 1) chap 1 AS 2) Nino Frank "A New Kind of Police Drama" (1946) BLA</p> <p>Recommended Readings: Claude Chabrol "The Evolution of the Crime Drama" (1955), BBA</p>
<p>Week 2</p>	<p>March 8 & 9</p>	<p>II SEMI-DOCUMENTARY NOIR</p> <p>Screenings: <i>Gun Crazy</i> (Joseph Lewis, 1950)</p> <p>Recommended Home Viewings: <i>Night and the City, He Walked By Night, House on 92nd Street, Phenix City Story, T-Men, Call Northside 777, Panic in the Streets, Boomerang, Kansas City Confidential</i></p> <p>Readings: 1) Spicer chap 2 2) "Towards a Definition of Noir" BLA 3) Paul Schrader "Notes on Film Noir" BLA 4) Also look at Weegee photos at http://museum.icp.org/museum/collections/special/weegee/</p>
<p>Week 3</p>	<p>March 15 & 16</p>	<p>NOIR STYLE</p> <p>Screening: <i>Double Indemnity</i> (Billy Wilder, 1944)</p> <p>Recommended Home Viewings: <i>Gun Crazy, Pickup on South Street, The Killers, DOA, Force of Evil</i></p>

FILM PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE 204

		Readings: 1) AS chap 3 2) Porfirio "Noir Title Sequence" BLA
Week 4	March 22 & 23	PRIVATE EYES Screening <i>Murder My Sweet</i> (Edward Dmytryk, 1944); Recommended Home Viewings , <i>The Big Sleep</i> , <i>Kiss Me Deadly</i> , <i>Maltese Falcon</i> , <i>The Third Man</i> , <i>Where the Sidewalk Ends</i> , <i>DOA</i> , <i>Lady in the Lake</i> , <i>Where Danger Lives</i> , <i>Mystery Street</i> Readings: 1) AS chap 4 First Assignment DUE Wednesday March 23 NOTE: NO TUTORIALS THIS WEEK
Week 5		Easter Break: Thursday 24 to Wednesday 30 March 2016 NOTE NO LECTURES, SCREENINGS OR TUTORIALS THIS WEEK
Week 6	April 5 & 6	TICK-TOCK: TEMPORALITY, SPACE AND NOIR Screening: <i>The Big Clock</i> (John Farrow, 1948) Readings: Vivian Sobchack: Lounge Time: Postwar Crises and the Chronotope of Film Noir" BLA Recommended Home Viewings: <i>The Stranger</i> ; <i>Journey Into Fear</i> , <i>The Third Man</i> , <i>The Killers</i> , <i>Criss Cross</i>
Week 7	April 12 & 13	THE HEIST Screening: <i>The Asphalt Jungle</i> (John Huston, 1950): clips <i>Gun Crazy</i> (Joseph Lewis, 1950), <i>The Killing</i> (Stanley Kubrick, 1956) Recommended Home Viewing: <i>Rififi</i> , <i>Bob le Flambeau</i>
Week 8	April 19 & 20	THE FEMME FATALE Screening <i>Out of the Past</i> (Jacques Tourneur, 1947) Recommended Home Viewings <i>Lady from Shanghai</i> ; <i>Force of Evil</i> , <i>Scarlet Street</i> , <i>Woman in the Window</i> , <i>The Strange Love of Martha Ivers</i> , <i>The Killers</i> ; <i>Dead Reckoning</i> , <i>Crime of Passion</i> , <i>Too Late for Tears</i> , <i>Gun Crazy</i> , <i>Where Danger Lives</i> , <i>Tension</i> Readings: Chap 5 AS Second Assignment (short paper due) April 19 by 4 pm at office.
		Mid-trimester Break: Monday 25 April to Sunday 1 May
Week 9	May 4	No Screening May 3 Midterm Test May 4
Week 10	May 10 & 11	NECROPHILIA, AESTHETICS, MODERNITY AND NOIR Screening <i>Laura</i> (Otto Preminger, 1944) ; <i>Kiss Me Deadly</i> (Robert Aldrich, 1955) Recommended Home Viewings: <i>Portrait of Jennie</i> , <i>Woman in the Window</i> , <i>Scarlet Street</i> , <i>I Wake Up Screaming</i> , <i>Rebecca</i> , <i>Phantom Lady</i> Readings: Kente Minturn 'Peinture Noir: Abstract Expressionism and Film Noir' BB; Robert Porfirio "Dark Jazz: Music in Film Noir" BB

		Recommended Readings: Robert Corber “Resisting the Lure of the Commodity: Laura and the Spectacle of the Gay Male Body” BB
Week 11	May 17 & 18	<p>HOM(M)OSEXUALITY & THE FEMME FATALE</p> <p>Screening: <i>Gilda</i> (Charles Vidor, 1946). Dr. Thompson away at conference. Please watch lecture virtually (URL TBA)</p> <p>Recommended Home Viewings: <i>Crossfire</i></p> <p>Readings: 1) Karen Hollinger “Film Noir, Voice Over and the Femme Fatale” BB 2) Richard Dyer Resistance through Charisma: Rita Hayworth and Gilda” BLA</p> <p>Recommended Additional Readings: Gilda Press Pack, BLA</p>
Week 12	May 24 & 25	<p>EVERYBODY DIES</p> <p>Screening: <i>Strange Love of Martha Ivers</i> (Lewis Milestone, 1946)</p> <p>Recommended viewings: <i>Postman Always Rings Twice, They Live By Night, Kiss Me Deadly, Criss-Cross, Night and the City, Asphalt Jungle, Elevator to the Gallows, The Killers, Lady From Shanghai</i></p> <p>Recommended Readings: Roy Grundmann “Business and the Bitch” BLA</p>
Week 13	May 31 & June 1	<p>GANGSTER NOIR</p> <p><i>The Big Heat</i> (Fritz Lang, 1953); <i>White Heat</i> (Raoul Walsh, 1949)</p> <p>Recommended Home Viewings: <i>Le Samourai, Bob Le Flambeur, The Killers</i> (1964), <i>I Walk Alone, White Heat, Body and Soul</i></p> <p>Readings: None</p>
		FINAL PAPERS DUE June 3