University of Calgary
Department of Communication, Media and Film
FILM 405-01
Advanced Topic in Film Genre: Pre-Code Cinema
Winter 2020
January 13, 2020—April 15, 2020
(excluding February 16-22, April 10 + 13)

Screenings: Monday 2:00PM - 4:45PM
Lectures: Wednesday 3:00PM - 4:50PM

Instructor: Dr. Lee Carruthers
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Email: lee.carruthers@ucalgary.ca
Web Page: See course page via D2L
Office Hours: Fridays 2-4PM

Course Description
This course surveys the phenomenon of pre-code cinema, focusing on films produced in Hollywood between the announcement of the Hays Code and its enforcement, 1930-1934. By this, we will test the claim that the films produced in these years emerged from a “parallel universe” (Doherty, 1999), generating representations of sex, vice, violence, and immorality without equal in the classical era. Close consideration will be given to industrial policy and practices, and the stipulations of the Motion Picture Production Code text; more richly, the course engages the cultural, technological, intellectual, and creative contexts from which these titles spring, as well as the distinctive character of the films themselves. To situate these works, we will examine significant filmic precedents, assessing the extent to which silent cinema and avant-garde practice inform pre-code aesthetics. A special emphasis of the course concerns the films’ resonance for the present moment, illuminating contemporary issues of identity and urban experience.

Additional Information
This course assumes and requires your familiarity with basic film terms. For your ongoing reference, a 6-page Glossary of Formal Terms will be provided on D2L, under ‘Course Documents.’ You will be expected to use these terms, and to deploy basic film-analytical skills, in class discussion, online postings, and assignments.

Objectives of the Course
This course has three main objectives:
1. To examine a representative range of pre-code titles, locating common features and idiosyncratic elements via narrative, stylistic, and thematic analyses
2. To develop a nuanced understanding of the conditioning contexts of 1930s film production, situating pre-code films as complex objects that answer to particular commercial and cultural imperatives
3. More broadly, to consider the ways pre-code cinema highlights questions of medium, representation, and cultural legibility.
Viewing Requirements
The weekly screenings for this course are scheduled on **Mondays 2:00 - 4:45PM**. Please note that attendance at all screenings is required. For repeat viewings and/or close analysis, the films are held at the TFDL and may be viewed on site; additionally, some course titles may be available online. These resources are not a substitute for the scheduled screenings, but may prove helpful for assignments.

Participation Requirements
Regular attendance and informed participation are essential components of this course that will help to determine your final grade. You are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings, and thus prepared to discuss these materials specifically. Please note that a significant percentage of your grade is based on participation. If you do not make an informed contribution to in-class and online discussion on a weekly basis, you can expect to receive zero for participation: there is no other basis for this part of your grade. Besides the weekly readings + screenings, there is a simple task to be completed every week, as follows:

Every week, go to the D2L site to submit a detailed screening note about the weekly film(s). There will be a general question or prompt for you to discuss. Your response should be a paragraph or so in length; it should focus on a detail or raise a specific issue that you plan to talk about in class. These responses are required and must be submitted weekly before the deadline (Friday at 10PM, unless specified otherwise). Finally, please be advised that posts that do not respond to the prompt in a specific and thoughtful manner will not accrue marks.

Policy on the use of Electronic Communication Devices
Laptops are for note-taking only. Using a laptop for email or unauthorized browsing during class time will jeopardize your participation grade. Likewise, texting and cell phone use is not permitted during class time: turn off these devices when you arrive at the classroom to avoid grade penalties.

Textbooks and Readings:
The course has two main sources of required readings. The first is the **course textbook**, available at the Campus Bookstore: Thomas Doherty's *Pre-Code Hollywood: Sex, Immorality, and Insurrection in American Cinema 1930-1934* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), designated as 'PCH' on the syllabus. Second, a selection of additional readings are posted on the D2L course page: be sure to consult the schedule to confirm each week's reading assignment.

Assignments and Evaluation
Grades will be determined as follows:

- **Reading Quizzes (5 dates: 4 count for marks)**
  - weekly
  - 20%

- **D2L posts & In-class discussion**
  - weekly
  - 15%

- **Midterm (short film + critical analysis, take-home)**
  - Week 7, March 4
  - 25%

- **Final Essay**
  - Week 13, Apr. 15
  - 40%
  - (A paper based in historical research, and/or close textual analysis, 2500 words in length, on one or more of the central films or issues of the course. Detailed instructions for the successful completion of this essay will be distributed in Week 10, by March 25th.)

  * The **Reading Quizzes**, listed above, are designed to confirm your familiarity with the weekly readings. As such, they will **not** be scheduled in advance but rather will happen on 5 separate occasions throughout the semester, usually during the lecture period. Reading Quizzes cannot be re-scheduled or
‘made-up’ unless there is a documented illness; if you miss a quiz, the marks are forfeited. Only 4 out of 5 quizzes will count for marks, however: so, you can miss one, or discount one. Come to class prepared!

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Submission of Assignments
Please include your name and ID number on all assignments and hand in your essays directly to your instructor. If you are unable to do so, please use the drop box in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. Note: It is your responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that you submit the proper version (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission).

Be prepared to provide photo ID to pick up assignments in SS 320. Private information related to individual students is treated with the utmost regard by University of Calgary faculty. Student assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty, and personal information is collected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. Please note that instructors may use audio or video recorded for lesson capture, assessment of student learning, and self-assessment of teaching practices.

Policy for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Student Accommodations
Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS); SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access. Students who require an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) or another legitimate reason should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should provide supporting documentation to support their request; however, instructors may not require that a medical note be presented. For the policy on supporting documentation the use of a statutory declaration, see Section M.1 of the University Calendar: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html. Also see FAQs for Students: https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq

Expectations for Writing
Department policy directs that all written assignments and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization and proper documentation of research sources. For further information, please refer to the University of Calgary Calendar section on writing across the curriculum: http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html

Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale
The following table outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. Final grades are reported as letter grades. For components graded using percentages or numerical scores, those values will be used directly in calculating the final course grade, while
for components graded using letter grades, the letter grades will be converted to the midpoint values listed in the final column of the table below in calculating the final course grade.

In this course, final grades are reported as letter grades. Quizzes will be assessed with point grades; midterm assignment and final essays will receive letter grades. Participation and Discussion Board contributions will receive a point score. The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*</th>
<th>Letter grade % equivalent for calculations*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Outstanding performance</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>96 - 100%</td>
<td>98.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>Excellent performance</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 - 95.99%</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>Approaching excellent performance</td>
<td>A -</td>
<td>85 - 89.99%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>Exceeding good performance</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>80 - 84.99%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Good performance</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>75 - 79.99%</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>Approaching good performance</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70 - 74.99%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>Exceeding satisfactory performance</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65 - 69.99%</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>60 - 64.99%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>Approaching satisfactory performance</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>55 - 59.99%</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>53 - 54.99%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>50 - 52.99%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Failure. Did not meet course requirements.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 49.99%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Column 4: If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades. Column 5: These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

Plagiarism
Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media. You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people’s words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there.

For information on citation and documentation styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, etc.), visit the Student Success Centre resource links at [https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support](https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/writing-support) or the
If you need help with your writing or have questions about citing sources, please consult your instructor or visit the Student Success Centre, 3rd floor, Taylor Family Digital Library. To book an appointment, go to https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success?utm_source=ssc&utm_medium=redirect&utm_campaign=redirect

Instructor Intellectual Property & Copyright Legislation
Course materials created by the instructor (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the same course section and term may be allowed under fair dealing. Check with the instructor if you have any questions about sharing materials with classmates.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Misconduct
For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

Research Ethics
Whenever you perform research with human participants, including surveys, interviews, or observations as part of your university studies, you are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval and for following university research ethics guidelines. In some cases, your instructors may apply for course-based research ethics approval for certain assignments, and in those cases, they must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, please see https://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/arts-researchers/resources-researchers-and-instructors/ethics

Deferrals of Course Work and Requests for Reappraisal
For university regulations and procedures related to deferrals of exams and course work, requests for reappraisals, and other matters, please see the relevant sections in the University Calendar: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html

Student Support Services and Resources
Please visit https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines for information about student support services and resources, including Wellness and Mental Health Resources, Student Success programs and services, the Student Ombuds Office, the Student Union, and Safewalk.

For resources on D2L, visit http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students. IT support is available at itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by calling 403-220.5555.
Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings
A detailed schedule of lectures, readings, and screenings will be made available when the course begins.