

SYLLABUS
EN 386.01 Seminar in Literature and Film
The Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock: Rear Windows and Wrong Men

Spring 2012

Dr. Mark Osteen

Office: HU 242B; Hrs: TTH 11-1:30, or by appointment

Phone: x2363; e-mail: mosteen@loyola.edu

COURSE LEARNING AIMS:

- ▶ To provide a discussion-oriented format that encourages everyone to participate and exchange ideas: to debate and enjoy the fruits of challenging intellectual discourse.
- ▶ To enable you to create your own research paper topics and to write substantial, sophisticated critical essays.
- ▶ To help you master the tools necessary to film analysis and interpretation, including the essential technical terms related to Film Studies.
- ▶ To view and study a significant number of the feature films directed by the most popular and critically discussed filmmaker in the history of cinema. To enable students to become Hitchcock experts.
- ▶ To watch some really cool movies and read some excellent books.
- ▶ To have fun.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Patrick McGilligan. *Alfred Hitchcock: A Life in Darkness and Light*. ReganBooks, 2003.
Sidney Gottlieb, ed. *Hitchcock on Hitchcock: Selected Writings and Interviews*. U of California P, 1995.
Sidney Gottlieb, ed. *Alfred Hitchcock Interviews*. U P of Mississippi, 2003.
Robert Kolker, ed. *Alfred Hitchcock's Psycho: A Casebook*. Oxford UP, 2004.
Francois Truffaut, *Hitchcock*. Rev. Ed. Touchstone, 1984.
Joseph Conrad. *The Secret Agent*. 1907. Penguin, 1990.
Patricia Highsmith. *Strangers on a Train*. 1950. Norton, 1993.

REQUIRED FILMS:

1. *The Lodger* (1927)
2. *Blackmail* (1929)
3. *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934)
4. *The 39 Steps* (1935)
5. *Sabotage* (1936)
6. *The Lady Vanishes* (1938)

7. *Rebecca* (1940)
8. *Foreign Correspondent* (1940) (Recommended)
9. *Suspicion* (1941)
10. *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943)
11. *Lifeboat* (1944)
12. *Spellbound* (1945) (Recommended)
13. *Notorious* (1946)
14. *Rope* (1948)
15. *Strangers on a Train* (1951)
16. *Rear Window* (1954)
17. *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956)
18. *The Wrong Man* (1957)
19. *Vertigo* (1958)
20. *North by Northwest* (1959)
21. *Psycho* (1960)
22. *The Birds* (1963)
23. *Frenzy* (1972)

FILM VIEWINGS

You are responsible for watching every film listed on your own time: ***we will not watch the full movies in class.*** All films are on reserve at the Media Center at the Loyola Notre Dame Library. Over the past few years, these classic films have become increasingly available via Netflix and other sources; therefore, I have not set up group viewings. You must figure out how to watch the films, whether it be by visiting the library, renting DVDs, streaming the films, or using your DVR. **You are expected to watch the widescreen (not “full screen”) versions of all films made after 1950.**

REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Daily Preparation:** Attendance is required. Anyone who misses more than one class should expect his or her grade to suffer. Excused absences for illness or a death in the family must be documented. Tardy arrivals disrupt the class; please arrive on time. **Check Moodle before every class to gain access to assignments, questions and links. Usually I post study questions to guide your reading no later than the day before class. Please read them and be prepared to answer these questions;** some days I will ask you to write out answers and collect them.
- 2. Participation:** Participation—which includes attendance, quizzes, contributions to class discussions, Moodle posts—counts a great deal toward your final grade. If you do not participate, there is no chance you’ll receive a B or better. Your participation, however,

is assessed in terms of *quality*, not by *quantity*. Well-considered, thoughtful remarks advance discussion and contribute to our education; thoughtless blurts and uninformed responses (for example, from students who have not watched the assigned films or read the assigned texts) interfere with that education.

3. Moodle Posts: *Every student must post a substantial response to a film once per week.* We will divide the class in half; each half is responsible for an expansive post on half of the films (i.e., alternating). These should be well-written, thoughtful posts of at least two or three cohesive paragraphs; they should not be text messages or reviews. The best strategy is to isolate one or two scenes or techniques, or develop one topic. *Each student must also respond to at least three other students' posts each week; these should be on the film for which you do not post a long response.* Those responses should engage your peers in dialogue. You will be graded on the quality of your posts, not just on the quantity. Therefore, responses that say only something like, "sick post, Andrew," are virtually worthless. Your responses should become more sophisticated as the course proceeds.

4. Group Presentation:

Each student will deliver an oral presentation, probably with a partner. You will sign up for a date, author and film on the second day of class. The presentations should analyze a few elements in a film and develop a lively presentation from those elements. You will meet with me a week before your presentation to determine a topic. *All presentations must incorporate film, and may not run longer than 20 minutes.* Your research paper, based upon your presentation, will be due one week after your presentation. Your grade derives from the quality of research, the poise and clarity of your delivery, and the cohesiveness and cogency of your remarks.

Students will also evaluate each others' presentations by completing an evaluation sheet. You are graded on your evaluations of others; these grades become part of your daily participation grade.

5. Research Paper:

- a. Each student will write a research paper of 8-15 pages, **due one week after your presentation.** Each student should meet with me after the presentation to discuss a topic and sources.
- b. Your research paper **must** incorporate at least three secondary critical, biographical or theoretical sources, and it **must include discussion of a film or films.** Refereed journal articles taken from Project Muse, or JSTOR are reliable; you may also use unfiltered websites such as Imdb.com, but they do not count as one of your three secondary sources. **I have placed on reserve at the library several critical books on Hitchcock. Please use these!** Check with me before using any other Internet source in your paper. Remember, doing a Google search is *not* research!
- c. All research papers **must** be submitted to me electronically (mosteen@loyola.edu) as an e-mail attachment, as well as in hard copy, or uploaded on Moodle's

turnitin.com “Research Paper” assignment. I will check any suspicious paper for plagiarism.

- d. Late papers are graded down 1/3 letter grade per day late, unless you make arrangements with me *in advance*.

6. Film techniques quiz. Not everyone in this course has the same level of experience in film studies; hence, there will be a **quiz** on film techniques during the third week of class. Even if you’re a Film Studies minor, you must take the quiz.

7. Shot analyses. Because editing is so crucial to Hitchcock’s cinema, each student will complete **two** shot analyses during the semester, one for each half of the course. For these you will select a scene from a film we have studied, list the individual shots in the sequence, and then, in a concise paragraph, outline the meaning of the editing and camera movements for theme and character and their effect on viewers’ responses. I’ll provide an example early in the course. You should also post your shot analysis on the Moodle Forum that week. **You may not turn in your shot analyses during midterm week, or during the final two weeks of class.** You may not write a shot analysis of the following sequences: the murder or bus sequences in *Sabotage*; the crop-duster sequence in *North by Northwest*; the shower sequence in *Psycho*.

8. I’ll leave open the possibility of a final exam. If we have one, the ratios below will be adjusted so that the exam counts 20%; everything else will be reduced by 5% each. Our exam is scheduled for Friday, December 14th, at 6:30 pm. If we don’t have an exam, that would be a great time for an end-of-semester review session and party! If everyone keeps up with the work and we have lively, stimulating classes, we won’t have a final exam. So it’s up to you!

RATIOS:

Seminar paper:	30%
Weekly posts and participation:	25%
Shot analyses and quiz(zes):	25%
Presentation:	20%

DISABILITIES NOTICE

If you have a letter from Disability Support Services (DSS) indicating that you have a disability requiring academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need in this class. Then schedule a meeting with me during office hours. If you need academic accommodations due to a disability and have not registered with DSS, please contact the Disability Support Services Office at (410) 617-2062.

HONOR CODE NOTICE

This course is covered by the Loyola College Honor Code. **All students guilty of plagiarizing or cheating on any assignment will fail the course, regardless of their grades on other assignments or activities.**

The English department regards plagiarism and other forms of cheating as the antithesis of scholarship, learning, collegiality, and responsible citizenship. The department defines plagiarism as any unacknowledged use of another's words or ideas. This definition applies to non-print media, including (especially!) the Internet, as well as to books, magazines, journals, newspapers, and other print media.

It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and to avoid it in all assignments. Students should familiarize themselves with the *Loyola Undergraduate Catalogue*'s statement on "Intellectual Honesty," and with the section "Integrating Sources and avoiding Plagiarism" (pp. 197-202) in Lunsford's *Easy Writer*, the Loyola English Department's grammar and style handbook. Anyone having questions or uncertainties about plagiarism should consult with the instructor before submitting any assignment. When in doubt, err on the side of safety! Neither ignorance of the definition of plagiarism nor the lack of intention to deceive constitutes an acceptable defense in matters of scholarly dishonesty.

SCHEDULE OF FILMS AND READINGS

EN 386.01: The Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock

I. The English Years

September 4: Introduction to the course and to film techniques.

September 6: Film: *The Lodger*. Reading: McGilligan 1-85. More film techniques.

September 11: Film: *Blackmail*. Reading: McGilligan 85-127.

September 13: Film: *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934). Reading: McGilligan 127-69; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: "Why Thrillers Thrive" (109).

September 18: Reading: Conrad, *The Secret Agent*, through Chapter 8. More film terms.

September 20: Reading: *The Secret Agent*, to end. Quiz on film terms.

September 25: Film: *Sabotage*. Reading: McGilligan 184-94; Truffaut 21-73, 89-94, 105-113;

Hitchcock on Hitchcock: “Direction” (253), “The Enjoyment of Fear” (116).

September 27: Film: *The 39 Steps*. Reading: McGilligan 169-184; Truffaut 94-103; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “Core of the Movie—the Chase” (125); *Interviews*: 10-13. Presentation.

October 2: Film: *The Lady Vanishes*. Reading: McGilligan 194-211; Truffaut 116-25; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “The Censor Wouldn’t Pass It” (196). Presentation.

II. Hitch Comes to Hollywood

October 4: Film: *Rebecca*. Reading: McGilligan 211-53; Truffaut 127-33; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “In the Hall of the Mogul Kings” (227). Presentation.

October 9: Film: *Suspicion* and *Foreign Correspondent* (recommended). Reading: McGilligan 253-90; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “Lecture at Columbia University” (267). Presentation.

October 11: Film: *Shadow of a Doubt*. Reading: McGilligan 291-322; Truffaut 151-55. Presentation.

October 16: Film: *Lifeboat*. Reading: McGilligan 323-43; Truffaut 155-61; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “Production Methods Compared” (205). Presentation.

October 18: Film: *Notorious*. Reading: McGilligan 366-87; Truffaut 169-73; *Interviews*: 17-23. Presentation.

October 23: Film: *Rope*. Reading: McGilligan 387-414; Truffaut 179-84; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “My Most Exciting Picture” (275); *Interviews*: 23-33. Presentation.

III. Master of Suspense

October 25: Film: *Rear Window*. Readings: McGilligan 453-90; Truffaut 213-23. Presentation.

October 30: Reading: Highsmith, *Strangers on a Train*, through Chapter 27.

November 1: Film: *Strangers on a Train*. Reading: Highsmith, *Strangers on a Train* to end; McGilligan 415-53; Truffaut 193-99. Presentation.

November 6: Film: *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956). Reading: McGilligan 449-522; Truffaut 228-33; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “Film Production” (210). Presentation.

November 8: Film: *The Wrong Man*. Reading: McGilligan 523-49; Truffaut 235-43.

Presentation.

November 13: Film: *Vertigo*. Reading: McGilligan 550-76; Truffaut 243-49.

November 15: Film: *Vertigo*. Reading: *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “Women Are a Nuisance” (79), “Elegance above Sex” (95).

November 20: Film: *North by Northwest*. Reading: Truffaut 249-57; 259-66. Presentation.

November 22: Thanksgiving Break.

November 27: Film: *Psycho*. Reading: McGilligan 576-601; Rebello, in Kolker (29-57); *Interviews*: 67-83.

November 29: Film: *Psycho*. Reading: Douchet, Wood, Williams, Toles, in Kolker. Truffaut 266-83; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock* : “Redbook Dialogue” (146). Presentation.

December 4: Film: *The Birds*. Reading: McGilligan 605-81; Truffaut 285-99; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “On Style” (285), “It’s a Bird” (315); *Interviews*: Fallaci (55-66), “Dialogue on Film” (84-104), Janet Maslin (105-18).

December 6: Film: *Frenzy*. Reading: McGilligan 681-end; Truffaut 333-48; *Hitchcock on Hitchcock*: “Surviving” (59); *Interviews*: 119-85.