

# history of media arts I



## Course description.

This is the first of a two-semester course that explores the historical development of the media arts, including the film, broadcasting, and sound recording industries until 1965. Investigates the relationships between economics, industrial history, and social and political systems, and the styles and techniques of specific films and broadcast programs. Special attention is given to the diversity of styles of presentation in the media. (4 cr.)

We cannot cover all aspects of media history to 1965 in this course and will only be able to scratch the surface of a vast and fascinating field. Therefore, students are encouraged to continue to explore aspects of media history that they find

interesting outside of the classroom by reading books and articles, watching and listening to additional material, accessing reputable internet sites, and by taking other media history courses offered at upper levels of the VMA curriculum.

## Required text.

Thompson, K., & Bordwell, D. (2019). *Film history: An introduction*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Additional required readings and

course materials available through the course Canvas page.

## Policies.

### Communication

You can expect that I will respond to emails promptly, but please allow a 48-hour response time for all communication.

### Late Assignments

I will deduct up to 5 percent per day for all late assignments. Any work that is not made up within

contact  
info

Dr. Cindy S. Vincent, Ph.D.  
cindy\_vincent@emerson.edu  
Virtual Office Hours:  
Tuesdays 12-2 pm  
& by appointment

## grading

Paper 1	25%
Paper 2	25%
Paper 3	25%
Course Discussions	15%
Class Exercises	10%

20 days of the original due date will not be accepted. No late assignments will be accepted after the last day of class.

### Attendance

There is no grade for attending class. However, if you miss a class, in-class exercises may not be made up.

### Grading

I will not discuss grades in the classroom. All discussions will take place at least 24 hours after the grade is received. Each student is responsible for completing all course requirements and for keeping up with all that goes on in the course. Final grades will be determined by all course assignments and extra credit.

## Course assignments.

### Short Papers

Over the course of the semester you will write three papers. Once a month you will choose a media era we discuss in the course to research and write an in-depth 5- to 7-page paper. More details will be provided on the course Canvas page.

### Course Discussions

Plan to build on the required readings/screenings during class through critical conversations with classmates and complete Canvas discussions outside of class online.

### Class Exercises

Class exercises will build on the readings/screenings and conversations that should be completed prior to attending class.

### *Extra Credit*

Every student has the opportunity to earn 15 extra credit points for: 1) being on time to every class and staying the full duration of the class period, and 2) attending every class. You must meet both criteria.



## Course goals.

G1. Provide an overview of the prevailing theories and history of media studies

G2. Explore the different sub-fields and methodological approaches to media studies

G3. Examine the relationship between media structures and human behavior, social relations, social institutions, and culture

## Learning objectives.

LO1. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of media arts to 1965

LO2. “Think historically” while showing evidence of adequate study skills through performance on tests and quizzes

LO3. Explicate the relationship between film form and its historical and cultural contexts

LO4. Observe with knowledge and reflect upon the articulation of a film’s content, form and structure

LO5. Demonstrate a competency in discussing the ways in which film is influenced and shaped by individuals, movements, institutions and technologies with local, national, transnational and global dimensions

LO6. Convey an understanding of the relationship between film form and its historical and cultural contexts

## The fine print.

### Accessibility Statement

Emerson is committed to providing equal access and support to all students who qualify through the provision of reasonable accommodations so that each student may fully participate in the Emerson experience. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) staff will be working remotely for the fall of 2020. If you have a disability that may require accommodations, please contact SAS at 617-824- 8592 or [SAS@emerson.edu](mailto:SAS@emerson.edu) to make an appointment with an SAS staff member. Students are encouraged to contact SAS early in the semester. Please be aware that accommodations are not applied retroactively.

### Plagiarism Statement

It is the responsibility of all Emerson students to know and adhere to the College’s policy on plagiarism, which can be found at: [emerson.edu/policy/plagiarism](http://emerson.edu/policy/plagiarism). If you have any questions concerning the Emerson plagiarism policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, please speak to me.

### Diversity Statement

Every student in this class will be honored and respected as an individual with distinct experiences, talents, and backgrounds. Issues of diversity may be a part of class discussion, assigned material, and projects. I will make every effort to ensure that an inclusive environment exists for all students. If you have any concerns or suggestions for improving the classroom climate, please do not hesitate to speak with me or to contact the Social Justice Center at 617-824-8528 or by email at [sjc@emerson.edu](mailto:sjc@emerson.edu)

### Title IX Statement

I am a responsible employee at Emerson College which means I am not a confidential resource therefore I am required to report disclosures that may violate Emerson’s Sexual Misconduct Policy. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the offices of Violence Prevention and Response, Counseling and Psychological Services, or Health and Wellness. Otherwise, if you would like to report an incident involving a possible violation of Emerson’s Sexual Misconduct Policy, please contact our Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@emerson.edu](mailto:titleix@emerson.edu) or 617-824-8999. For more information: <http://www.emerson.edu/reportaconcern>

### COVID-19

If you are asked to quarantine or isolate, please stay in your residence. If you need assistance while quarantining or isolating, please reach out to Student Affairs at 617-824-8640. For more information on Emerson’s COVID-19 guidelines please visit <https://www.emerson.edu/one-emerson>

## Fall 2020 Tentative\* Course Schedule

\*This schedule is subject to change

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments**
<b>Week 1 August 31</b>		
Online	Introductions The Context of 19th Century Invention/ The Origins of Recording	
<b>Week 2 September 7</b>		
9/7	NO CLASS (Labor Day)	
Online	The Invention and Early Years of the Cinema, 1880s-1904 <b>Screening:</b> <i>Those Awful Hats</i> (1909), <i>An Unseen Enemy</i> (1912), <i>Painted Lady</i> (Griffith, 1912), <i>The Kid</i> (Chaplin, 1921)	Preface to the 4 <sup>th</sup> edition Ch. 1
<b>Week 3 September 14</b>		
In-Class	Silent Cinema Features	Ch. 2-3
Online	The Late Silent Era of Hollywood, 1920-1928 <b>Screening:</b> <i>Sherlock Jr.</i> (Keaton, 1924), <i>The Circus</i> (Chaplin, 1928)	Ch. 7
<b>Week 4 September 21</b>		
In-class	The Art of Silent Cinema I	Ch. 5
Online	Art of Silent Cinema II/ Avant Garde Cinema <b>Screening:</b> <i>Sunrise</i> (Murnau, 1927)	Ch. 8
<b>Week 5 September 28</b>		
In-class	French Impressionism	Ch. 4
Online	Soviet Montage School <b>Screening:</b> <i>Triumph des Willens / Triumph of the Will</i> , (Riefenstahl, 1935)	Ch. 6 <b>PAPER 1 DUE</b>
<b>Week 6 October 5</b>		
In-class	Motion Pictures & the Advent of Sound	Ch. 9
Online	The Hollywood Studio System, 1930-1945 <b>Screening:</b> <i>Footlight Parade</i> , (Bacon, Berkeley, 1933)	Ch. 10
<b>Week 7 October 12</b>		
10/12	NO CLASS (Indigenous People's Day)	
Online	The Radio Boom / The F.C.C. / The Radio Networks	

Screening: *Citizen Kane* (Welles, 1941)

**Week 8 October 19**

In-class The Origins of Noir Ch. 11

Online WWII Ch. 14

Screening: *Casablanca* (Curtiz, 1943)

**Week 9 October 26**

In-class American Cinema in the Postwar Era, 1945-1960 Ch. 15

Online Postwar Cinema Beyond the West, 1945-1959 Ch. 18

Screening: TBD PAPER 2 DUE

**Week 10 November 2**

In-class Birth of Television and Early Programming

Online From Live TV to The Telefilm

Screening: *The Hitchhiker* (Ida Lupino, 1952)

**Week 11 November 9**

In-class Auteurist Theory Ch. 19

Online Italian Neorealism Ch. 16

Screening: *Cleo from 5 to 7* (Agnes Varda)

**Week 12 November 16**

In-class New Waves and Young Cinemas Ch. 20

Online The Italian Auteurs

Screening: *Dr. Strangelove*

**Week 13 November 23**

In-class Direct Cinema / Cinema Verite Ch. 21

Online Direct Cinema Pt. II

Screening:  *Shadows* (Cassavetes, 1960)

**Week 14 November 30**

Online Early 60s Television

Screening: *Hard Days Night* (Lester, 1964)

**Week 15 December 7**

Online PAPER 3 DUE

\*\*Additional readings and assignments listed on course Canvas site