

Fall 8-15-2011

## ENG 3504-001: Film And Literature

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### Recommended Citation

Martinez, Robert, "ENG 3504-001: Film And Literature" (2011). *Fall 2011*. 100.  
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## English 3504 Section 001, Film and Literature

### “Fella, you don’t know what this story means”: Conspiracy, Paranoia, and Trauma in Literature and Film

Instructor: Dr. Robert Martinez

Coleman Hall 3371

E-mail: rlmartinez@eiu.edu

Office Hours: Mondays, 5-6 PM; Wednesdays 12-1 PM; Fridays, 2-4 PM; and by appt.

Course time: MW 3-5 in Coleman 3691 & Fine Arts 1210 (in Doudna)

#### Course Description:

In this course, we will focus on the explosion of radical developments in film and literature that respond to key political, social, and philosophical challenges of the late-twentieth century and emerging twenty-first century. Specifically, we will examine how film and literature attempt to capture, represent, and explore themes of paranoia, conspiracy, and trauma in our political and social reality. Some of our films and texts will have their roots in major cultural events (such as the political assassinations and scandals of the 1960s/early 1970s, the Vietnam War, the aftermath of the Civil Rights movement), while others will focus on more subtle social and technological developments and their impact on the individual. Crucial to this class will be the question of identity and the nature of truth—in other words, how do we process shocking events and attempt to make sense of them? How do we fashion meaning out of such experiences? How do perplexing experiences affect our sense of personal and national history?

#### Course Expectations:

- Students will be required to attend all film screenings.
- Students will engage in enthusiastic class discussion.
- Students will write short paper responses to all films and possibly some texts.
- Students will write a final term paper (10-15 pages) and complete a “late” midterm exam.

#### Grading:

- Response papers: 40% (5% each)
- Midterm & Final exams: 25%
- Participation/discussion: 15%
- Term paper: 20%

Note: We will most likely discuss all works on Monday and most film screenings will occur on Wednesdays during “lab time.” Film screenings will be held in Fine Arts 1210, unless otherwise specified by me.

#### Required Texts:

1. Tim O’Brien, *In the Lake of the Woods*
2. J. G. Ballard, *Crash*
3. Sebastian Faulks, *Engleby*
4. John Edgar Wideman, *Philadelphia Fire*
5. David Bordwell & Kristin Thompson, *Film Art* (9<sup>th</sup> edition)
6. In-class handouts (to be announced)

#### Required Film Screenings:

1. Oliver Stone, *Platoon*
2. Michelangelo Antonioni, *Blow-Up*
3. Francis Ford Coppola, *The Conversation*
4. Alan Pakula, *The Parallax View*
5. Don Siegel, *Dirty Harry*
6. Michael Powell, *Peeping Tom*
7. Antonio Campos, *Afterschool*
8. Kathryn Bigelow, *Strange Days*

**Tentative Class Schedule – Film & Literature – Fall 2011**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What's Happening in Class</b>	<b>Homework</b>
Mon., 8/22	Introduction to course	
Wed., 8/24	Backgrounds to the Postwar Era: Historical events and cultural/theoretical patterns	Read the following in <i>Film Art</i> : pp. 118-138; 148-155 pp. 167-173; 173-180; 191-203 pp. 212-218; 223-235 pp. 274-298
Mon., 8/29	How do we understand film? Discuss the basics of film techniques (have <i>Film Art</i> reading completed!)	
Wed., 8/31	War & Trauma: Watch <i>Platoon</i> ; begin some discussion; assign group work on <i>Platoon</i>	Work on group assignment for <i>Platoon</i>
<b>Mon., 9/5</b>	<b>No Class – Labor Day</b>	
Wed., 9/7	Discuss <i>Platoon</i> ; group presentations	Read Caruth on trauma (TBA); Start reading <i>In the Lake of the Woods</i> (pp. 1-146)
Mon., 9/12	Discuss Caruth and <i>Platoon</i>	Continue reading <i>In the Lake of the Woods</i> !
Wed., 9/14	Discuss opening of <i>In the Lake of the Woods</i> , pp. 1-146	Finish reading <i>In Lake of the Woods</i> (pp. 147-303)
Mon., 9/19	Conclude discussion of <i>In the Lake of the Woods</i>	
Wed., 9/21	Watch <i>Blow-Up</i>	Write response to <i>Blow-Up</i>
Mon., 9/26	Discuss <i>Blow-Up</i> ; turn in response paper	
Wed., 9/28	Conspiracy & 1970s; watch <i>The Conversation</i>	Write response to <i>The Conversation</i>
Mon., 10/3	Discuss <i>The Conversation</i> ; turn in response paper	
Wed., 10/5	Watch <i>The Parallax View</i>	Write response to <i>The Parallax View</i> ; start reading Ballard's <i>Crash</i> (pp. 7-114)
Mon., 10/10	Discuss <i>The Parallax View</i> ; turn in response	
Wed., 10/12	Trauma, Sex, Morality: discuss <i>Crash</i> , pp. 7-114	Finish <i>Crash</i> (pp. 114-224)
Mon., 10/17	Conclude discussion of <i>Crash</i> , pp. 114-224	
Wed., 10/19	Watch <i>Dirty Harry</i>	Read selected film reviews of <i>Dirty Harry</i> (TBA); write response to film/reviews
Mon., 10/24	Discuss <i>Dirty Harry</i> ; turn in response	Start reading <i>Engleby</i> (pp. 1-112)
Wed., 10/26	Trauma, Sex, Morality II: watch <i>Peeping Tom</i>	Write response to <i>Peeping Tom</i> ; continue reading <i>Engleby</i> (pp. 113-224)
Mon., 10/31	Discuss <i>Peeping Tom</i> ; turn in response	Continue reading <i>Engleby</i>
Wed., 11/2	Discuss <i>Engleby</i> , pp. 1-224	Finish <i>Engleby</i> (pp. 225-336)
Mon., 11/7	Conclude discussion of <i>Engleby</i>	
Wed., 11/9	Watch <i>Afterschool</i>	Write response to <i>Afterschool</i>
Mon., 11/14	Discuss <i>Afterschool</i> ; turn in response	
Wed., 11/16	<b>Late-term Exam</b>	Read <i>Philadelphia Fire</i> over the break (pp. 3-208)
<b>Mon., 11/21-Fri., Nov. 25</b>	<b>No Classes – Thanksgiving Break</b>	
Mon., 11/28	Discuss <i>Philadelphia Fire</i>	
Wed., 11/30	Watch <i>Strange Days</i>	
Mon., 12/5	Finish <i>Strange Days</i> , discuss	Turn in <i>Strange Days</i> response paper on 12/7!
Wed., 12/7	<b>Last Day of Class:</b> wrap up <i>Strange Days</i> discussion/turn in response paper; final discussion, evaluations	Term paper due Friday, 12/9, by 4 PM!

**Final: Thursday, Dec. 15, 2.45-4.45 PM**