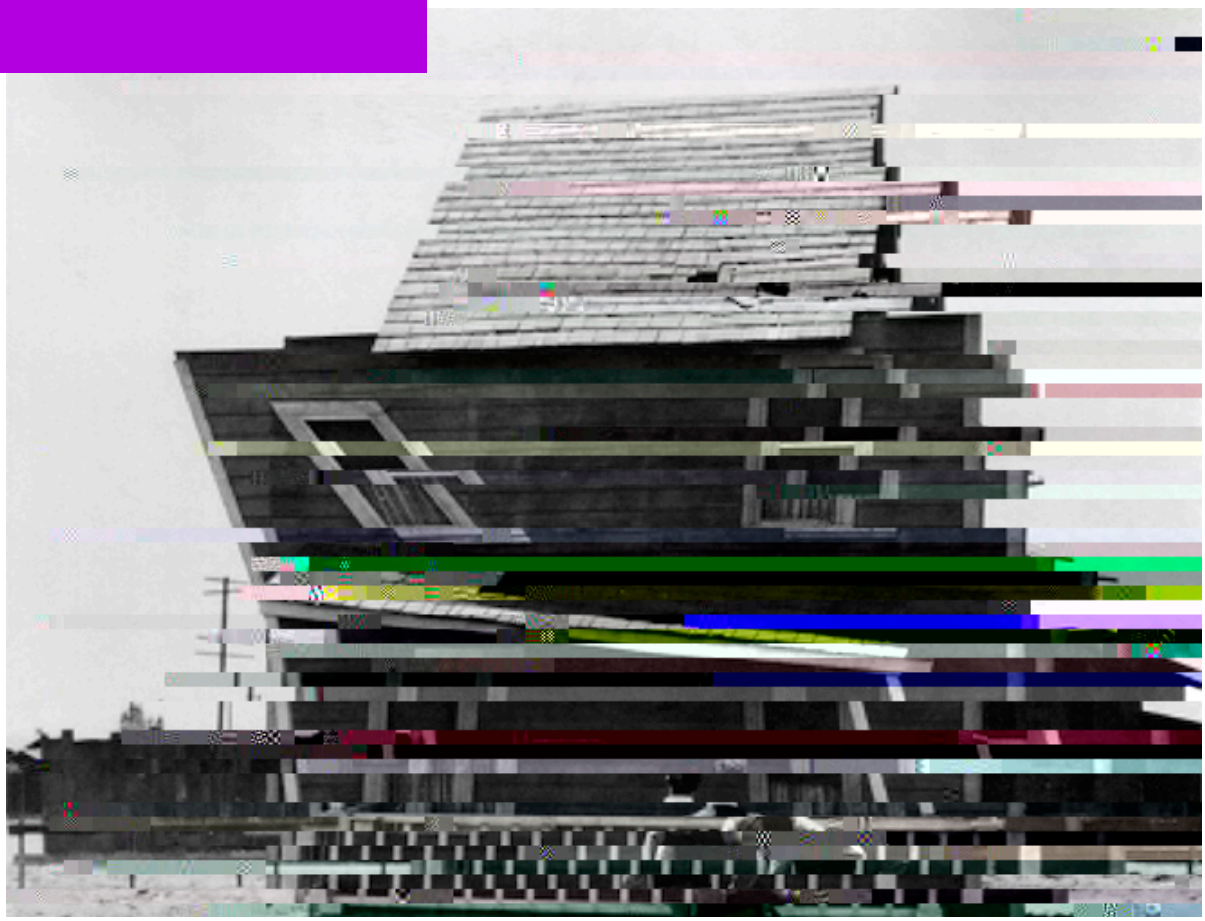

ARTS2064

A Case Study of Film Genre: Comedian Comedy

Semester One // 2018

School of the Arts and Media // UNSW Arts and Social Sciences

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Dr Sharon Mee	s.mee@unsw.edu.au	Thursday 4.30-5.30	Robert Webster Building, Level 2, Room 226	93855011

Lecturers

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Dr Melanie Robson	m.robson@unsw.edu.au			

School Contact Information

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The School of the Arts and Media would like to Respectfully Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and the Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

Attendance Requirements

A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face (F2F) or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.

A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, their request should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

For more information about the attendance protocols in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to: requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential academic information, see https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Subject Area: *Dgjk Qrsbgcq*

Film genres are more than the mechanism of classification based on subject matter that we associate with the western, the horror film, the musical, etc. From producers to consumers, from studio moguls to directors, to critics, fans and aficionados, the notion of genre is used as a key determinant of a film's meaning. Genre films work within and have the opportunity to reflect on society's primary myths of identity and individuality, freedom and responsibility, cultural stability and social change. This course will consider some of the most fascinating questions raised by genre films: What are the parameters for standardization and innovation within film genres? How do individual filmmakers rework the conventions of a genre to maintain its relevance their time? In what sense can film genres operate as instigators of change? How do genre films reflect the ravages of history?

This course will investigate the conventions of the genre of Comedian Comedy in relation to theories of comedy and the comic. By attending to key works in philosophy, psychoanalysis and literature, in addition to film studies, and to different comic forms, such as slapstick, parody and satire, the course will consider both why we laugh and the cultural function of comedy.

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to

1. Understand key issues and debates in film genre study and theory
2. Identify the key features of the genres studied in the course
3. Recall key debates that have taken place around the genres studied
4. Develop a critical argument in relation to debates raised in the course
5. Conduct and deploy research in film genre studies
6. Work in small groups and teams to undertake small research tasks and present findings
7. Contextualise and articulate their own critical position in spoken and written form
8. Recognise some of the ways that aesthetic, technological, social, and industrial factors have shaped the development of the genres studied

Teaching Strategies

Rationale for the inclusion of content and teaching approach

The rationale for this course aligns with many of the aims and objectives of the Film Studies major. It builds on the foundational knowledges in Film Studies that students gain in the level 1 courses (skills in film analysis; introductory knowledge of the history of film and cinema; an awareness of the importance of national and international contexts for filmmaking) and develops these knowledges through the close study of particular genres and by raising and exploring questions about popular cinema(s) and cultural value. Through its focus on the interrelations between industrial, technological, social and aesthetic factors and their role in shaping film genres, it develops students' understandings of the historical development of film as both a specific medium and as part of a constantly evolving media landscape. By demonstrating some of the research methodologies deployed in genre studies and in studies of film history more generally, it provides students with some of the critical skills required for level 3 Film

Studies courses. In addition, and in line with the aims of our level 2 courses, Film Genres allows students to practice and develop more generic skills such as theoretical and practical project planning, academic research, critical thinking and writing skills, and skills in communication and in collaborative work.

Assessment 2: Collaborative tutorial facilitation

Start date: 22/03/2018

Details: This assessment task is comprised of several components. Working in teams of two or three, students will develop and conduct a class quiz based on the weekly lecture and tutorial readings, direct students in small group activities devoted to sequence analysis and contribute questions for class discussion.Students will be assessed both as a team (based on their submission of slides) and individually based on their class room contribution. Each part of the assessment will attract 10% of your overall mark for the course. Students must submit a printout of slides and a breakdown of responsibilities at the end of the tutorial. Students presenting should aim to finish 10 minutes before the end of the class in order to leave time to discuss the topic for the written paper with their tutor.Students receive an individual marking rubric.

Additional details:

Assessment criteria
—Relevance of quiz to key issues/questions/debates in tutorial readings
—Understanding and/or address of key issues in the readings
—Aptness of choice of sequence(s) for class analysis
—Pertinence of group activities to the scope of the topic
—Where relevant, evidence of working together as a group
—Management and supervision of group activities and class discussion
—Effective time management
—Submission of slides

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 3: Individual classroom contributions

Start date: 8/03/2018

Length: null

Details:

Start date: 5/03/2018

Length: 3 summaries, each 500 words

Details: 1500 words.Students receive written feedback, including a rubric and grade.

Additional details:

Instructions
For this task students are asked to provide a 500 word summary of three texts. The first text will be compulsory and then students will have to choose two out of the following three readings. The word limit for this exercise is strict and work that exceeds it will be heavily penalized.
1. Seidman, Steve. 'Introduction.' In Comedian Comedy: A Tradition in Hollywood Film. UMI Research Press, 1981. Due: 5pm, Friday 16th March.
2. Bergson, Henri. Chapter One, ‘Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic’ (1911). Translated by Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell, 7-63. Copenhagen: Green Integer, 1999.

Assessment Criteria
—Capacity to read carefully and understand complex theoretical scholarship
—Identification of the structure of the argument
—Identification of key ideas and concepts
—Presentation of assignment in a coherently written and grammatically and typographically correct form
—Consistent and thorough referencing of sources

Submission notes:Your work must be submitted to Turnitin by the due date.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Students are expected to put their names and student numbers on every page of their assignments.

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

Late Assessment Penalties

An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).

The late penalty is the loss of 5% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late. Lateness will include weekends and public holidays. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.

Work submitted fourteen (14) days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component, a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.

Work submitted twenty-one (21) days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

Special Consideration Applications

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances interfere with your assessment performance.

Sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond your control may:

* Prevent you from completing a course requirement,

* Keep you from attending an assessable activity,

* Stop you submitting assessable work for a course,

* Significantly affect your performance in assessable work, be it a formal end-of-semester examination, a class test, a laboratory test, a seminar presentation or any other form of assessment.

For further details in relation to Special Consideration including "When to Apply", "How to Apply" and "Supporting Documentation" please refer to the Special Consideration webstie:
https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.

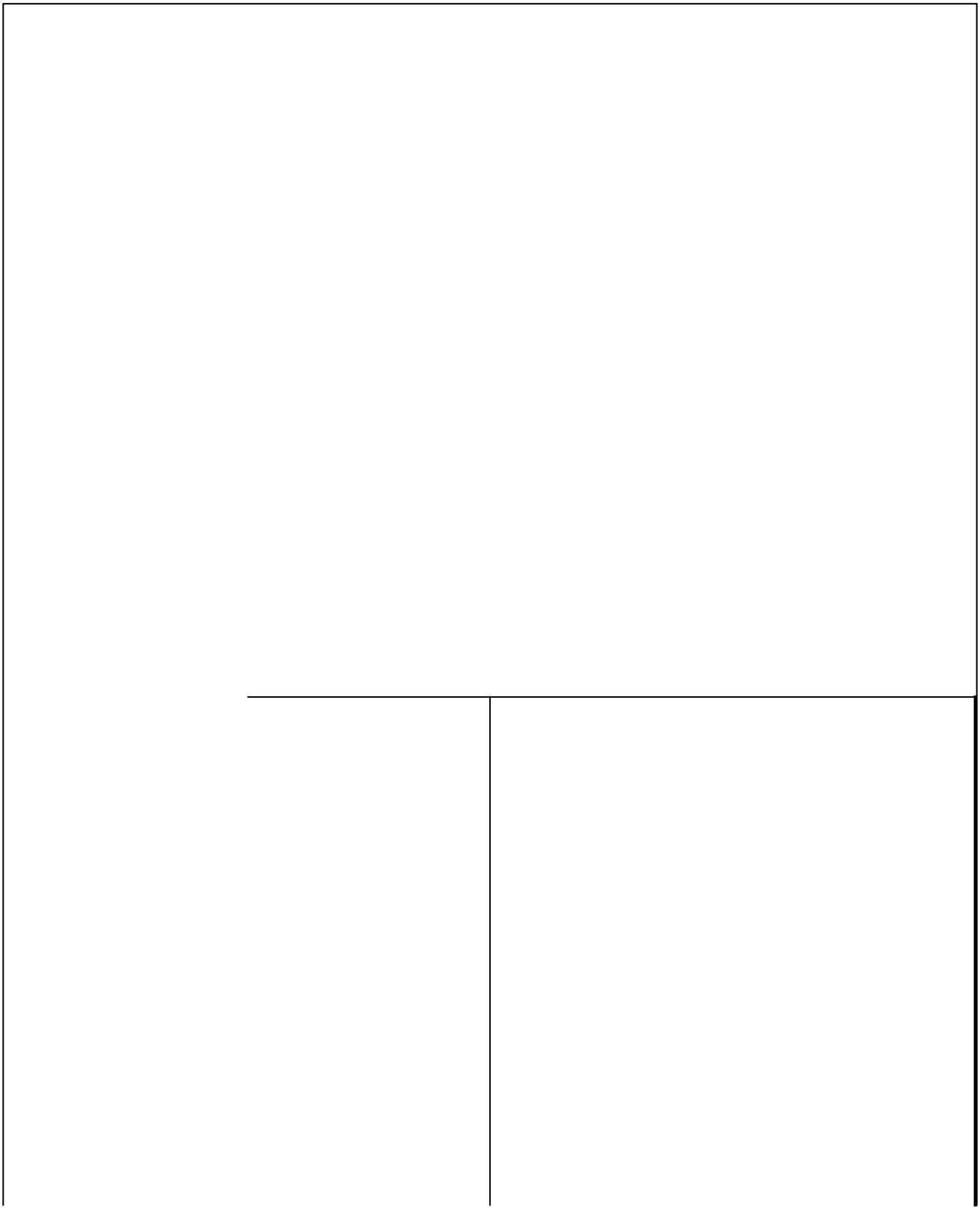
Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- better manage your time



		Riblet, Doug. 'The Keystone Film Company and the Historiography of Early Slapstick.' In Classical Hollywood Comedy, edited by Henry Jenkins and Kristine Brunovska Karnick. Los Angeles: American Film Institute and Routledge, 1995. Robinson, David. 'An Art of Lunacy: Sennett and Keystone.' In The Great Funnies: A History of Film Comedy. London: Studio Vista, 1969. Gunning, Tom. 'Crazy Machines in the Garden of the Forking Paths.' In Classical Hollywood Comedy, edited by Henry Jenkins and Kristine Brunovska Karnick. Los Angeles: American Film Institute and Routledge, 1995. (Library-High Use)
Week 4: 19 March - 25 March		Topic 3: The Genteel tradition Lecture/Screening: Harold Lloyd, *Safety Last!* (1923), dir. Fred Newmeyer and Sam Taylor, 74 mins. Compulsory reading Frye, Northrop. Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays, 163-186. Princeton University Press, 1957. Belton, John. Excerpt from Cinema Stylists, Filmmakers, no. 2. Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, 1983. Recommended reading Neale, Steve, and Frank Krutnik, Popular Film and Television Comedy, 121-131. London and New York: Routledge, 1990. (Library-High Use) Trahair, Lisa. 'Degradation and Refinement in 1920s Cinematic Slapstick.' In The Comedy of Philosophy: Sense and Nonsense in Early Cinematic Slapstick, 125-146. Albany: SUNY Press, 2008. (Library-High Use) Kerr, Walter. Chap. 11 in The Silent Clowns. New York: Knopf, 1975. (Library-High Use).
Week 5: 26 March - 1 April		Topic 4: Comedy and Narrative Lecture/Screening: Buster Keaton, *The General* (1927), dir. Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman, 77 mins. Compulsory reading

		Deleuze, Gilles. Cinema 1: The Movement-Image. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986. Chapter 9: ‘The Action-Image: The Large Form,’ Section 2 ‘The Laws of Organic Composition,' pp.151-155. Carroll, Noël. ‘Keaton: Film Acting as Action.' In Making Visible the Invisible: An Anthology of Original Essays on Film Acting, edited by Carole Zucker. The Scarecrow Press, 1990. Recommended reading Neale, Steve, and Frank Krutnik, 'Comedy and Narrative.’ Chap. 2 in Popular Film and Television Comedy. London: Routledge, 1990. (Available as ebook) Trahair, Lisa. ‘The Machine of Comedy: Gunning, Deleuze and Buster Keatongngngtnik, '1

		City Lights.' In The Comedy of Philosophy: Sense and Nonsense in Early Cinematic Slapstick, 169-190. Albany: SUNY Press, 2007. (ebook)
Week 7: 16 April - 22 April		Topic 6: Sound Comedy and the Marx Brothers Lecture/Screening: *Duck Soup* (1933), dir. Leo McCarey, 68 mins. Compulsory reading Mellencamp, Patricia. 'Jokes and Their Relation to the Marx Brothers.' In Cinema and Language, edited by Stephen Heath and Patricia Mellencamp. University Publications of America, 1983. Freud, Sigmund. Chapter V 'The Motives of Jokes – Jokes as a Social Process.' In Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious, translated by James Strachey. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976. Recommended reading Cavell, Stanley. 'Nothing Goes without Saying: Reading the Marx Brothers.' In Cavell on Film, edited by William Rothman, 183-192. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005. Trahair, Lisa. 'Jokes and their Relation to …' In The Comedy of Philosophy: Sense and Nonsense in Early Cinematic Slapstick, 105-124. Albany: SUNY Press, 2007. (ebook)
Week 8: 23 April - 29 April		Topic 7: The Comedy of Remarriage Lecture/Screening: *It Happened One Night* (1934), dir. Frank Capra, 105 mins. Compulsory reading Cavell, Stanley. 'Knowledge as Transgression: It Happened One Night.' In Pursuits of Happiness: The Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage, 71-109. Cambridge, MA: Harn

		'"What Becomes of Thinking on Film?" (Stanley Cavell in Conversation with Andrew Klevan).' In Film as Philosophy: Essays on Cinema After Wittgenstein and Cavell, edited by Rupert Read and Jerry Goodenough, 167-209. Basingstoke: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2005.
Week 9: 30 April - 6 May		Topic 8: The Comic Auteur Lecture/Screening: Jerry Lewis, *The Ladies' Man* (1961), 95 mins. Compulsory reading Shaviro, Steven. 'Comedies of Abjection: Jerry Lewis.' In The Cinematic Body, 106-124. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993. Krutnik, Frank. 'Jerry Lewis: The Deformation of the Comic.' Film Quarterly 48, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 12-26. Recommended reading Bukatman, Scott. 'Paralysis in Motion: Jerry Lewis's Life as a Man.' In Comedy, Cinema, Theory, edited by Andrew Horton. University of California Press, 1991. Advanced reading Weber, Samuel. 'The Shaggy Dog.' In The Legend of Freud, 100-118. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982. Deleuze, Gilles. Cinema 2: The Time-Image. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta. The Athlone Press, 1989. Excerpt from Chapter 3, 'From Recollections to Dreams.'
Week 10: 7 May - 13 May		Topic 9: Satirical Comedy Lecture/Screening: Peter Sellers, *Dr Strangelove, or how I learned to stop worrying and love the bomb* (1964), dir. Stanley Kubrick, 91 mins. Compulsory reading Worcester, David. 'From the Art of Satire.' In Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism, edited by Ronald Paulson. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1971. Brustein, Robert. 'Dr Strangelove: Out of this

		world.' In Renaissance of the Film, edited by Julius Bellone. London: Collier Books, 1970. Recommended reading Nelson, Thomas Allen. Kubrick: Inside a Film Artist's Maze. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982. Advanced reading Deleuze, Gilles. Cinema 2: The Time-Image.

		Lecture/Screening: *Bridesmaids* (2011), dir. Paul Feig, 125 mins. Compulsory reading Warner, Helen. '"A New Feminist Revolution in Hollywood Comedy"?: Postfeminist Discourses and the Critical Reception of Bridesmaids.' In Postfeminism and Contemporary Hollywood Cinema. Basingstoke: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2013. Matthews, Nicole. 'Performing Gender in Comedian Comedy.' In Comic Politics: Gender in Hollywood Comedy after the New Right. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000. Recommended reading Rowe, Kathleen. The Unruly Woman: Gender and the Genres of Laughter. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995.

Resources

Prescribed Resources

MOODLE

Recommended Resources

SEE COURSE GUIDE ON MOODLE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course Evaluation and Development

Students will have the opportunity to evaluate this course on My Experience. As a result of previous student evaluation a 'people's choice' week has been added where students will be able to elect a film they wish to collectively view and discuss in relation to the course criteria. Assessment procedures have been modified to allow more opportunity for me to provide students with feedback. Additional course materials have been provided on Moodle at students' request.

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