

Instructor: Katie Ferrell
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Office Hours: Tuesdays @ lunch

Literary Adaptation Fall 2011

“Take all the richness that the novel affords you and translate that for the eye and the ear.” –Richard Price

“Film is visual brevity.... If the novel is a poem, the film is a telegram.” –Michael Hastings

Course Description:

In this course we will study literary works and their film adaptations. We will look at a variety of genres, from children’s stories and fairytales to family dramas and science fiction. We will first discuss the writing on its own (narrative techniques, themes, etc.) before examining how the novels and short stories have been interpreted for the screen. After viewing each film, we will compare the narrative strategies of each form, consider the relationship between word and image, and explore the artistic possibilities as well as the limitations of adaptation. In addition, we will consider the question of adaptability in terms of genre.

Main Texts:

Where the Wild Things Are, Maurice Sendak
“Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption” from *Different Seasons*,
Stephen King
Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? Philip K. Dick
The Joy Luck Club, Amy Tan
The Road, Cormac McCarthy

* We will also read a selection of stories and essays from Stephanie Harrison’s *Adaptations: From Short Story to Big Screen*

Films:

Where the Wild Things Are, Spike Jonze
The Shawshank Redemption, Frank Darabont
Blade Runner, Ridley Scott
Rear Window, Alfred Hitchcock
The Joy Luck Club, Wayne Wang
American Splendor, Shari Springer Berman & Robert Pulcini
The Road, John Hillcoat
Memento, Christopher Nolan

Course Expectations:

Participation is a crucial component of this seminar style class. Please come to each class having read the assigned materials. Also be prepared to discuss your ideas and/or questions. In order to foster a classroom atmosphere where all participants feel safe to voice their ideas, we will maintain a high level of respect for the opinions and feelings of others. Coursework will include three formal essays (with mandatory revisions), a final exam, in-class writing assignments, and regular pop quizzes on assigned reading.

Grade Breakdown:

50%: Essays:

15%: Essay #1

15%: Essay #2

20%: Essay #3

20%: Final Exam

30%: Class Participation & Homework (attendance, discussion, in-class writing, essay drafts, pop quizzes on assigned reading, behavior, etc.)

Policy on Late Work:

1. Late work will be accepted, but will be penalized by half a letter grade (5%) per class day after the due date, capped at five days (total deduction will not exceed 25%). However, extenuating circumstances will be taken into account.
2. If you are absent the day an assignment is due, you can email me the assignment before class to avoid losing points. You will still need to bring a printed copy of the assignment when you return to class.
3. If you are absent during a pop quiz, you may write a response to the assigned reading for equal credit.
4. If you are absent, please email me or talk to a classmate to find out what you missed.

* **NOTE:** I will give you a reading schedule for each novel we read. I look forward to working with all of you!