

Instructor Resource Manual

for

Understanding Movies

Fourteenth Edition

Louis Giannetti





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Preface

If I had but one film to choose for a film analysis course, I would choose either *Citizen Kane* or *Amadeus*. *Amadeus* is so rich aesthetically, dramatically, and intellectually that it can support sustained analytical attention. Like *Citizen Kane*, *Amadeus* provides superior material for analysis in concert with each chapter of *Understanding Movies*.

Amadeus is a good film to study early in the course so that it can be used as a *reference film* for the rest of the semester. Use of a reference film facilitates class discussion, offers a touchstone for comparison to other films, and presents a suitable alternative to *Citizen Kane* for synthesis exercises and assignments. Any film can be selected as a course reference film, but *Amadeus* vibrates with creativity in every aspect of the cinema, making the film an excellent selection.

Supplemental resources for this text:

www.imdb.com This is the Internet Movie Database website. It is one of the world's largest compilations of film titles, viewer reviews, and movie production information.

www.filmsite.org Another comprehensive website that provides detailed summaries of many films in many genres.

www.rottentomatoes.com This website tracks film releases, box office grosses, and other pertinent information, including professional critic reviews. It is highly recommended.

www.metacritic.com/film/ Another website along the lines of Rotten Tomatoes.

www.rogerebert.com The home of one of the most popular film critics of modern times, Roger Ebert.

www.common sense media.org This website provides reviews and recommendations of films, especially for parents with young children. The critical reviews here are not geared toward an audience that seeks out journalistic and theoretical criticism.

www.worldbest.com/movies.htm A website that provides links to the websites listed above as well as many others that review film and follow Hollywood news and information.

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INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCE MANUAL

Introduction to REVEL

Welcome to the REVEL edition of *Understanding Movies* by Louis Giannetti. Every chapter in the fourteenth edition of *Understanding Movies* has been carefully revised for publication in REVEL, a fully digital experience designed to integrate text contents with interactive elements. *Understanding Movies* continues to be organized around elements of film and provides valuable insight into how movies communicate and convey meaning to their audiences through a unique network of language systems and techniques.

The narrative content is the same as the print text but contains enhancements; integrated media interactives and assessments let students read the content and engage with the material through hands-on applications. This immersive educational technology boosts student engagement, which leads to better understanding of concepts and improved performance throughout the course.

All chapters begin on an introductory screen with chapter-specific **learning objectives**.

Chapter 11 Critique

◀ Listen to the Audio

"Surely there are no hard and fast rules: It all depends on how it's done."

Pauline Kael, Film Critic

Learning Objectives

1. Name the three categories of people who critique movies, and list the three areas of inquiry on which critics and theorists focus their attention.
2. List the five ideological characteristics and six stylistic features of the neorealist style of film.
3. Describe how formalist film theories approach space, time, and reality in film.
4. Explain what makes an auteur, and describe how auteur theory revolutionized film criticism.

Each subsection of content appears on its own screen.

Theories of Realism

◀ Listen to the Audio

Most theories of realism emphasize the documentary aspects of film art. Movies are evaluated primarily in terms of how accurately they reflect external reality. The camera is regarded as essentially a recording mechanism rather than an expressive medium in its own right. The subject matter is paramount in the cinema of realism; technique its discreetly transparent handmaiden. As we have seen in the case of André Bazin (see **Chapter 4**), most theories of realism have a moral and ethical bias and are often rooted in the values of Islamic, Christian, and Marxist humanism.

Students can click on key terms to read a term's definition in-line with chapter content.

Most film historians regard cinema as too sprawling and complex to be covered by any single history. They view the field as a vast, infinite mass of data that needs to be sifted through and organized to be made coherent. Each historian concentrates on a given type of evidence, highlighting its significance while de-emphasizing or ignoring "irrelevant" data. Critics sometimes refer to this process of selection and emphasis as **foregrounding**—isolating fragments of evidence for the purpose of closer study and implicit value judgment. Each type of film historian necessarily removes the fragment from their ecological context, thus presenting us with a sonnet rather than a whole. Each type of historian will also choose to focus on different kinds of events and events.

foregrounding (n)
When a specialized art neglects one aspect of a work of art, it is common to analyze that aspect in a general way.

Movie stills and publicity shots not directly correlated to the text are clustered into interactives by topics related to the main narrative. These galleries allow students to pause and individually click through a group of images and their annotations.

Gallery 11.3 THE MANY FACETS OF FORMALISM



Each chapter includes a **journal prompt**. The journal prompt serves as a guided note-taking exercise to build student ability to critically analyze key elements in the development and creation of movies.

Journal: Different Means, Different Ends

Realists and formalists emphasize different elements in a movie. What does each value most, and what does each consider secondary or incidental? Is one style superior to the other? How so?

The response entered here will appear in the performance dashboard and can be viewed by your instructor.

Submit

Each main section ends with a three- to five-question **multiple-choice quiz**.

Quiz: Formalist Film Theories

Question 1 of 5

Worth 3 Points

Formalist film theorists believe that the filmmaker must exploit the limitations of the medium in order to create a work of art. Which one of these limitations then would a formalist filmmaker be least likely to exploit?

- the confining frame of a film
- the fragmented time-space continuum represented in films
- the two-dimensional aspect of film
- the affinity of film for capturing the actual world

3 attempts remaining

Submit

A variety of other interactive features integrated throughout each chapter also enhance student learning.

Every chapter ends with a **review** screen. The interactive elements on this screen provide students with opportunities to study the content of the chapter.

Advanced flash cards allow students to review and study each chapter's key terms.

Key Term Flashcards

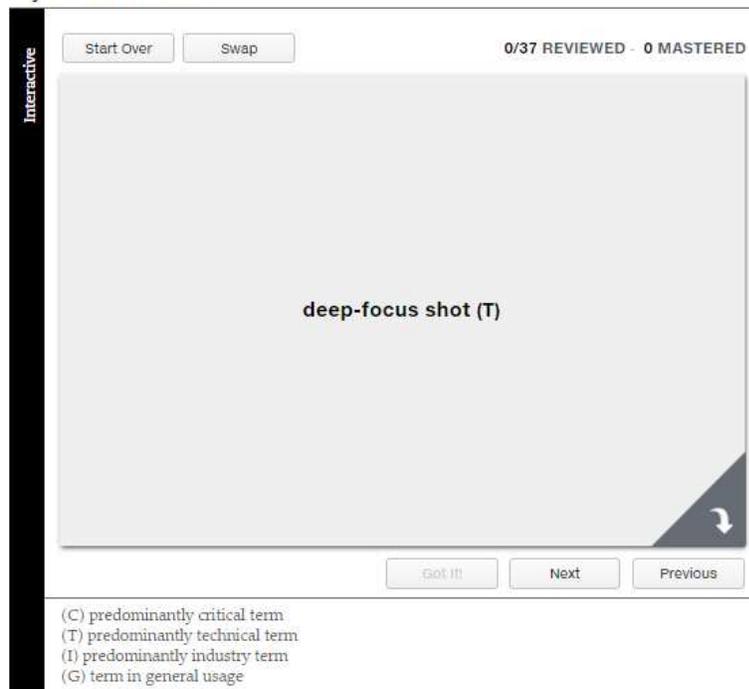
Interactive

Start Over Swap 0/37 REVIEWED - 0 MASTERED

deep-focus shot (T)

Got It! Next Previous

(C) predominantly critical term
(T) predominantly technical term
(I) predominantly industry term
(G) term in general usage

The image shows a digital flashcard interface. At the top, there are buttons for 'Start Over' and 'Swap', and a progress indicator '0/37 REVIEWED - 0 MASTERED'. The main area is a large grey rectangle containing the text 'deep-focus shot (T)'. In the bottom right corner of this rectangle is a small white arrow icon. Below the main area are three buttons: 'Got It!', 'Next', and 'Previous'. To the left of the main area is a vertical black bar with the word 'Interactive' written vertically. Below the main area is a legend with four entries: '(C) predominantly critical term', '(T) predominantly technical term', '(I) predominantly industry term', and '(G) term in general usage'.

End-of-chapter material also includes a ten-question **chapter quiz** and a **shared writing prompt**.

Chapter Quiz: Critique Question 1 of 10

Worth 5 Points

Of the following types of people who critique movies, which ones are most likely to be professional academics who study films on a philosophical level?

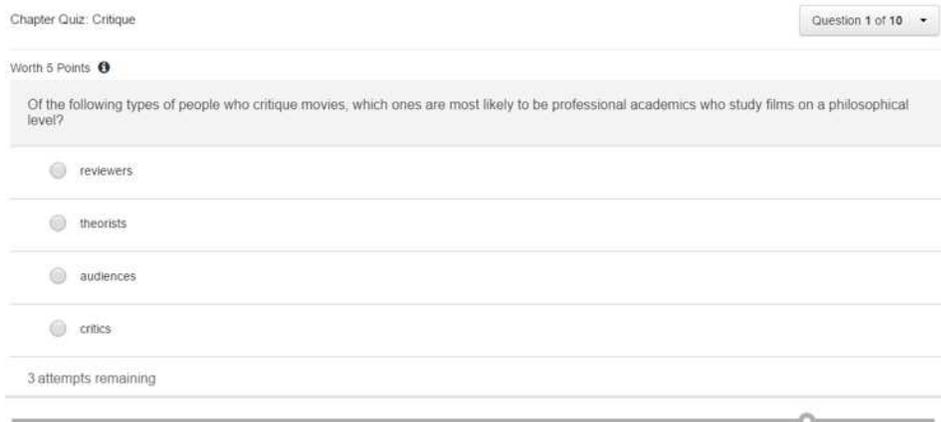
reviewers

theorists

audiences

critics

3 attempts remaining

The image shows a quiz interface. At the top, it says 'Chapter Quiz: Critique' and 'Question 1 of 10'. Below that, it says 'Worth 5 Points'. The question is 'Of the following types of people who critique movies, which ones are most likely to be professional academics who study films on a philosophical level?'. There are four radio button options: 'reviewers', 'theorists', 'audiences', and 'critics'. At the bottom, it says '3 attempts remaining' and there is a progress bar.

The **shared writing prompt** serves as an online discussion for students in a specific class to apply and analyze an essential chapter concept through contribution and response with their peers.

Worth 20 Points ⓘ

The auteur theory revolutionized film criticism, but it's far from definitive. What are the main weaknesses of the auteur theory? Its major strengths?

A minimum number of characters is required to post and earn points. After posting, your response can be viewed by your class and instructor, and you can participate in the class discussion.

Post

0 characters | 140 minimum

CHAPTER 1: PHOTOGRAPHY

Learning Objectives

1. Recognize the distinctions among the three principal styles of film and the three types of movies, and evaluate how the style affects the presentation of the story.
2. List the six basic categories of film shots and their purpose in developing the scene.
3. Describe the five basic angles in the cinema and what contextual information the audience derives from each choice.
4. Outline the various types of lighting styles used in film and the symbolic connotations of each.
5. Explain the way directors consciously use colors to symbolically enhance the film's dramatic content.
6. Identify how lens, filters, and stocks can intensify given qualities within a shot, and suppress others.
7. Evaluate the changes that digital technologies have had on film production, editing, presentation, and distribution.
8. Assess the role of cinematographers in the filmmaking process and identify how they are able to consolidate the various elements of film photography.

Outline

1. Realism and Formalism
 - a. Even before 1900, movies began to develop in two major directions: the realistic and the formalistic
 - i. Lumiere brothers' *The Arrival of a Train*
 - ii. Georges Melies' *A Trip to the Moon*
 - b. styles in cinema:
 - i. realism
 1. reproduces the surface of reality with a minimum of distortion
 2. preserves the illusion that the film world is unmanipulated
 - ii. formalism
 1. deliberately stylizes and distort raw materials
 2. the stylization calls attention to itself
 - iii. classicism
 1. most fiction films fall somewhere between these two extremes
 2. avoids the extremes of realism and formalism
 - c. types of films: documentary, fiction, avant-garde
2. The Shots
 - a. defined by the amount of subject matter that's included within the frame of the screen

- b. six basic categories of shots
 - i. extreme long shot
 - 1. photographed from a great distance away
 - 2. used as establishing shot
 - ii. long shot
 - 1. roughly the same amount of space as the staging area of a large theater
 - 2. deep-focus shot
 - A. a long shot consisting of a number of focal distances and photographed in depth
 - B. sometimes called a wide-angle shot because it requires a wide-angle lens to photograph
 - iii. full shot
 - 1. closest range within the long shot category
 - 2. just barely includes the human body in full
 - iv. medium shot
 - 1. the shot of the couple
 - 2. split focus rather than a single dominant focus
 - v. close-up
 - 1. shows very little if any locale
 - 2. concentrates on a relatively small object
 - vi. extreme close-up

3. The Angles

- a. the angle from which an object is photographed
- b. often serves as an authorial commentary on the subject matter
- c. five basic angles in the cinema
 - i. bird's-eye
 - 1. directly overhead
 - 2. permits us to hover above a scene like all-powerful gods
 - 3. the people photographed seem vulnerable and insignificant
 - ii. high
 - 1. not as extreme as bird's-eye
 - 2. often taken from a crane or high point to maximize locale
 - 3. gives viewer a general overview
 - 4. reduces the importance or power of a subject
 - 5. slows movement
 - iii. eye-level
 - 1. as if an observer were viewing the events
 - 2. permits us to make up our own minds about what kind of people are being presented
 - iv. low
 - 1. has the opposite effect of high
 - 2. a person photographed from below inspires fear and awe
 - v. oblique
 - 1. involves a lateral tilt of the camera
 - 2. suggests tension, transition, and impending movement

4. Light and Dark

- a. comedies and musicals tend to be lit in high key
- b. tragedies and melodramas are usually lit in high contrast
- c. mysteries, thrillers, and gangster films are generally lit in low key
- d. styles of lighting
 - i. high key: bright, even illumination and no conspicuous shadows
 - ii. low key: diffused shadows and atmospheric pools of light
 - iii. high contrast: harsh shafts of lights and dramatic streaks of blackness
- e. lights and darks have had symbolic connotations in general, artists have used darkness to suggest fear, evil, the unknown
 - i. light usually suggests security, virtue, truth, joy
 - ii. some filmmakers deliberately reverse light–dark expectations
- f. three-point lighting
 - i. cinematographers developed the technique during the Hollywood big-studio era
 - ii. the key light is the primary source of illumination, creates the dominant of an image
 - iii. fill lights, which are less intense than the key, soften the harshness of the main light source, revealing subsidiary details that would otherwise be hidden by shadow
 - iv. the backlights separate the foreground figures from their setting, heightening the illusion of three-dimensional depth in the image.
- g. painterly versus linear styles
 - i. a painterly style is soft-edged, sensuous, and romantic
 - ii. line is de-emphasized: colors and textures shimmer in a hazily defined, radiantly illuminated environment
 - iii. on the other hand, a linear style emphasizes drawing, sharply defined edges, and the supremacy of line over color and texture

5. Color

- a. color tends to be a subconscious element in film
 - i. strongly emotional in its appeal
 - ii. expressive and atmospheric rather than intellectual
- b. since earliest times, visual artists have used color for symbolic purposes
 - i. cool colors (blue, green, violet) tend to suggest tranquility, aloofness, and serenity
 - ii. cool colors also have a tendency to recede in an image
 - iii. warm colors (red, yellow, orange) suggest aggressiveness, violence, and stimulation
 - iv. they tend to come forward in most images

6. Lenses, Filters, and Stocks

- a. lenses
 - i. the camera's lens is a crude mechanism compared to the human eye
 - ii. especially with regard to size and distance, the camera records things literally
 - iii. realist filmmakers tend to use normal, or standard, lenses to produce a minimum of distortion

- iv. formalist filmmakers often prefer lenses and filters that intensify certain qualities and suppress others
- v. telephoto lenses produce a number of side effects that are sometimes exploited by directors for symbolic use
 - 1. most long lenses are in sharp focus on one distance plane only
 - 2. the longer the lens, the more sensitive it is to distances
 - 3. long lenses also flatten images, decreasing the sense of distance
- vi. wide-angle lenses, also called short lenses, have short focal lengths and wide angles of view
 - 1. used in deep-focus shots
 - 2. preserve a sharpness of focus on virtually all distance planes
 - 3. the wider the angle, the more lines and shapes tend to warp
 - 4. movement toward or away from the camera is exaggerated when photographed with a short lens
 - 5. the fish-eye lens is the most extreme wide-angle modifier
- b. filters
 - i. used for purely cosmetic purposes to make an actor taller, slimmer, younger, or older
 - ii. some trap light and refract it in such a way as to produce a diamond-like sparkle in the image
 - iii. many filters are used to suppress or heighten certain colors
- c. film stocks
 - i. two basic categories: fast and slow
 - ii. fast stock is highly sensitive to light and in some cases can register images with no illumination except what's available on location
 - iii. slow stock is relatively insensitive to light and requires as much as ten times more illumination than fast stocks
 - iv. traditionally, slow stocks are capable of capturing colors precisely, without washing them out
 - v. fast stocks are commonly associated with documentary movies

7. The Digital Revolution

- a. digital cinema combines television and computer technologies and is essentially electronic in nature
- b. the images are not stored on a filmstrip, but on memory cards and hard drives
- c. digital images can have a higher degree of clarity and resolution than celluloid images
- d. digital images are composed of "pixels" (short for picture elements) seen as tiny dots on the TV monitor
 - i. the more pixels that make up an image, the closer it resembles the subject being photographed, with a minimum of distortion
 - ii. pixels are usually arranged on a two-dimensional grid
 - iii. the sharpness or resolution of an image is a function of the number of pixels it contains
 - iv. standard video screens have about 480 scan lines of visual information
 - v. high-definition video (which is the favored form in cinema) has up to 1,080 scan lines

- e. digital technology has revolutionized special effects in movies
- f. digital video cameras are much more portable than big, clumsy 35mm film cameras
- g. digital technology can save millions of dollars in motion picture production costs
 - i. complex makeup can also be created digitally
 - ii. computer-generated images can be stored for future use
 - iii. traditional animation is being replaced by computer generated animation
 - iv. digital editing is also much easier than traditional methods
 - v. digital technology is making motion picture distribution and exhibition cheaper
- h. computer-generated images have radically undermined the traditional distinctions between realism and formalism in film theory

8. The Cinematographer

- a. director is generally the dominant artist in the best movies
- b. the principal collaborators—actors, writers, cinematographers—perform according to the director’s unifying sensibility
- c. sweeping statements about the role of the cinematographer are impossible to make
 - i. varies widely from film to film and from director to director
 - ii. virtually all cinematographers agree that the style of the photography should be geared to the story, theme, and mood of the film
- d. during the big-studio era—roughly from 1925 to 1955—most cinematographers believed that the aesthetic elements of a film should be maximized
 - i. beautiful pictures with beautiful people was the goal
 - ii. today such views are considered rigid and doctrinaire
- e. “Many times, what you don’t see is much more effective than what you do see,” the late Gordon Willis noted.
- f. realist directors are especially likely to prefer an unobtrusive style
- g. there are far more films in which the only interesting or artistic quality is the cinematography

Summary

Critics and scholars categorize movies according to a variety of criteria. Two of the most common methods of classification are by style and by type. The three principal styles—realism, classicism, and formalism—might be regarded as a continuous spectrum of possibilities, rather than airtight categories. Similarly, the three types of movies—documentaries, fiction, and avant-garde films—are also terms of convenience, for they often overlap.

Even before 1900, movies began to develop in two major directions: the realistic and the formalistic. The three styles of film, identified as realism, formalism, and classicism are general rather than absolute terms, and in the end, are really just labels.

Generally speaking, realistic films attempt to reproduce the surface of reality with a minimum of

distortion. Formalists, on the other hand, deliberately stylize and distort their raw materials so that no one would mistake a manipulated image of an object or event for the real thing. Classical cinema can be viewed as an intermediate style that avoids the extremes of realism and formalism.

Few films are exclusively one style over the others. Virtually all film directors go to the photographable world for their subject matter. What they do with this material captured by the camera lens, and how they shape and manipulate it, determines the eventual style the viewer perceives in the finished product.

The shots are defined by the amount of subject matter that's included within the frame of the screen. In general, shots are determined on the basis of how much of the human figure is in view. The shot is not necessarily defined by the distance between the camera and the object photographed. In actual practice, shot designations vary considerably.

Although there are many different kinds of shots in the cinema, most of them are subsumed under the six basic categories: (1) the extreme long shot; (2) the long shot; (3) the full shot; (4) the medium shot; (5) the close-up; and (6) the extreme close-up. The deep-focus shot is usually a variation of the long shot, consisting of a number of focal distances and photographed in depth.

The angle from which an object is photographed can often serve as an authorial commentary on the subject matter. There are five basic angles in the cinema: (1) the bird's-eye view; (2) the high angle; (3) the eye-level shot; (4) the low angle; and (5) the oblique angle.

If the angle is slight, it can serve as a subtle form of emotional coloration. If the angle is extreme, it can represent the major meaning of an image. The angle is determined by where the camera is placed, not the subject photographed. Film realists tend to avoid extreme angles. Formalist directors are concerned with the angle that best captures the essential nature of the subject. Extreme angles involve distortions. By distorting the surface realism of an object, a greater truth may be achieved—a symbolic truth.

The use of light and shadow can also create mood and emotional impact. The illumination of most movies is seldom a casual matter, for lights can be used with pinpoint accuracy. There are a number of different styles of lighting. Usually designated as a lighting key, the style is geared to the theme and mood of a film, as well as its genre. Comedies and musicals tend to be lit in high key, with bright, even illumination and no conspicuous shadows. Tragedies and melodramas are usually lit in high contrast, with harsh shafts of lights and dramatic streaks of blackness. Mysteries, thrillers, and gangster films are generally in low key, with diffused shadows and atmospheric pools of light.

Lights and darks have had symbolic connotations. In general, artists have used darkness to suggest fear, evil, the unknown. Light usually suggests security, virtue, truth, joy. Lighting can be used realistically or expressionistically. The realist favors available lighting, at least in exterior scenes. Formalists use light less literally. They are guided by its symbolic implications and will often stress these qualities by deliberately distorting natural light patterns.

During the Hollywood big-studio era, cinematographers developed the technique of three-point lighting, which is still widely practiced throughout the world. With three-point lighting, the key light is the primary source of illumination. Fill lights, which are less intense than the key, soften the harshness of the main light source. Backlights separate the foreground figures from their setting.

A painterly lighting style is soft-edged, sensuous, and romantic, best typified by the Impressionists. Line is de-emphasized: Colors and textures shimmer in a hazily defined, radiantly illuminated environment. On the other hand, a linear style emphasizes drawing, sharply defined edges, and the supremacy of line over color and texture.

Color in film didn't become commercially widespread until the 1940s. Sophisticated film color was developed in the 1930s, but for many years a major problem was its tendency to prettify everything.

Color tends to be a subconscious element in film. It's strongly emotional in its appeal, expressive and atmospheric rather than intellectual. Since earliest times, visual artists have used color for symbolic purposes. In general, cool colors (blue, green, violet) tend to suggest tranquility, aloofness, and serenity. Cool colors also have a tendency to recede in an image. Warm colors (red, yellow, orange) suggest aggressiveness, violence, and stimulation. They tend to come forward in most images.

Because the camera lens is so primitive compared with the human eye, some of the most striking effects in a movie image can be achieved through the distortions of the photographic process, using appropriate lenses, filters, and stocks.

Realist filmmakers tend to use normal, or standard, lenses to produce a minimum of distortion. These lenses photograph subjects more or less as they are perceived by the human eye. Formalist filmmakers often prefer lenses and filters that intensify certain qualities and suppress others.

Long lenses tend to flatten images, decreasing the sense of distance between depth planes. Two people standing yards apart might look inches away when photographed with a telephoto lens.

The wide-angle lenses, also called short lenses, have short focal lengths and wide angles of view. These are the lenses used in deep-focus shots, for they preserve a sharpness of focus on virtually all distance planes. The wider the angle, the more lines and shapes tend to warp, especially at the edges of the image. Distances between various depth planes are also exaggerated with these lenses.

Film stocks fall into two basic categories: fast and slow. Fast stock is highly sensitive to light and in some cases can register images with no illumination except what's available on location, even in nighttime sequences. Slow stock is relatively insensitive to light and requires as much as ten times more illumination than fast stocks.

Digital technology has radically changed how movies are photographed, how they are edited, how they are distributed, and how they are shown to the public. Introduced in the 1980s and refined in the 1990s, digital technology has, for all intents and purposes, replaced the celluloid technology that dominated the motion picture industry for over a hundred years.

Digital cinema combines television and computer technologies and is essentially electronic in nature. The images are not stored on a filmstrip, but on memory cards and hard drives. Digital images can have a higher degree of clarity and resolution than celluloid.

Digital images are composed of "pixels" (short for picture elements), which can be seen as tiny dots on the TV monitor. Because these pixels can be easily manipulated by computer, digital technology has revolutionized special effects in movies.

Digital video cameras are much more portable than the big, clumsy 35mm film cameras. Digital

video is also cheap. Digital video can save movie producers millions in other costs such as in editing, which is also much easier than traditional methods, as well as in distribution and exhibition of movies. Traditional animation, with its time-consuming, hand-drawn celluloid images, is also being replaced by computers, which produce images that are created digitally, not by hand.

The cinematographer plays a vital role in the creation of a film. Generally speaking, the cinematographer (who is also known as the director of photography, or D.P.) is responsible for arranging and controlling the lighting of a film and the quality of the photography. Usually the cinematographer executes the specific or general instructions of the director.

The collaborative work between this person and the director shapes the overall vision of the film and how it will look onscreen. Of course, certain directors take more control over this vision than others, but the cinematographer is still the person who oversees the camera crew. Films worth discussing include any Hitchcock film, *Traffic*, and *Days of Heaven*.

Active Learning Assignments

Learning Objective 2. List the six basic categories of film shots and their purpose in developing the scene; and Learning Objective 3. Describe the five basic angles in the cinema and what contextual information the audience derives from each choice.

1. Watch the “Cropduster, Highway 41” scene from Alfred Hitchcock’s *North by Northwest* (available on YouTube). List all the camera shots and angles used by the filmmaker. Which shots do you think are the most effective? Why? How would you characterize the style of this scene? Realist? Formalist? Classical? Why?

Learning Objective 1. Recognize the distinctions among the three principal styles of film and the three types of movies, and evaluate how the style affects the presentation of the story.

2. Make a list of science fiction or western films you’ve seen and then a list of comedies or romantic comedies. Now think about which category of film, sci-fi/western or comedy/rom-com, uses which shots and angles most often. Does one genre use more long and extreme-long shots than the other? What about medium shots and two-shots? If you think there is a difference, explain why. Do you think there are any hard-and-fast rules when it comes to shooting any particular genre of film?

Learning Objective 7. Evaluate the changes that digital technologies have had on film production, editing, presentation, and distribution.

3. Compare two scenes, one from the original *War of the Worlds* (1953) and one from the most recent remake by Steven Spielberg in 2005. Explain how special effects have changed from one film to the other, in terms of the technical capabilities available to the production team, and also how those effects strengthen or weaken the narrative.

In-class Discussion Questions and Answers

Learning Objective 1. Recognize the distinctions among the three principal styles of film and the three types of movies, and evaluate how the style affects the presentation of the story.

1. **Question:** *Gold Diggers of 1933* presents us with a unique cinematic experience, especially with respect to style. What type of film is this, documentary, fiction, or avant-garde? Or is it a mixture of one or more of these types? Why? What filmmaking style best describes this film: realist, formalist, or classical? Why?

Consider:

- The choreographies of Busby Berkeley are triumphs of artifice, far removed from the real world. Depression-weary audiences flocked to movies like this precisely to get away from everyday reality. They wanted magic and enchantment, not reminders of their real-life problems.
- Berkeley's style was the most formalized of all choreographers.
- He liberated the camera from the narrow confines of the proscenium arch, soaring overhead, even swirling among the dancers, and juxtaposing shots from a variety of vantage points throughout the musical numbers.
- He often photographed his dancers from unusual angles.
- Sometimes he didn't even bother using dancers at all, preferring a uniform contingent of good-looking young women who are used primarily as semiabstract visual units, like bits of glass in a shifting kaleidoscope of formal patterns.

Learning Objective 5. Explain the way directors consciously use colors to symbolically enhance the film's dramatic content.

2. **Question:** How does color, or the lack of it, create mood and atmosphere in Vittorio De Sica's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*? Why did De Sica shoot the film in color? Why didn't he just shoot the film in black-and-white? Why do you think he did not mix color and black-and-white?

Consider:

- Since earliest times, visual artists have used color for symbolic purposes. In general, cool colors (blue, green, violet) tend to suggest tranquility, aloofness, and serenity. Cool colors also have a tendency to recede in an image.
- Warm colors (red, yellow, orange) suggest aggressiveness, violence, and stimulation. They tend to come forward in most images.
- Black-and-white photography in a color film is sometimes used for symbolic purposes. Some filmmakers alternate whole episodes in black and white with entire sequences in color.
- The problem with this technique is its corny symbolism. The jolting black-and-white sequences are too obviously "significant" in the most arty sense. A more effective variation is simply not to use too much color, to let black and white predominate.
- In De Sica's *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, which is set in Fascist Italy, the early portions of the movie are richly resplendent in shimmering golds, reds, and almost every shade of green.
- As political repression becomes more brutal, these colors almost imperceptibly begin to wash out, until near the end of the film the images are dominated by whites, blacks, and blue-grays.

Learning Objective 7. Evaluate the changes that digital technologies have had on film

production, editing, presentation, and distribution.

3. **Question:** In *Life of Pi*, the special effects are so realistic they almost convince us that we're actually seeing the young protagonist sharing a lifeboat with a ferocious tiger. Explain why this might be a problem in categorizing this film as realist or formalist in style? Explain why you think the filmmakers chose to use digital effects as opposed to a real tiger for example? What was the result of the audience viewing the film in 3-D? Did it change the style at all?

Consider:

- Critic Stephen Prince has observed that such technological advancements as computer-generated images have radically undermined the traditional distinctions between realism and formalism in film theory. Why do you think that is?
- In *Life of Pi*, the tiger was not a real tiger, but was created by CGI (computer-generated imagery). The tiger was created by hundreds of artists at Rhythm & Hues, based in Los Angeles.
- Most of the movie takes place within the narrow confines of the boat. Is this important?
- The crew viewed film footage of actual tigers before constructing their digital tiger. Why?
- The 3-D is strikingly realistic, as the tiger seems to be snarling, growling, and lunging at the viewer—a perfect demonstration that realism is not always based on reality.

