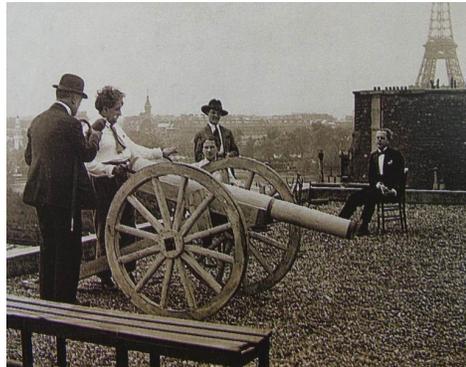
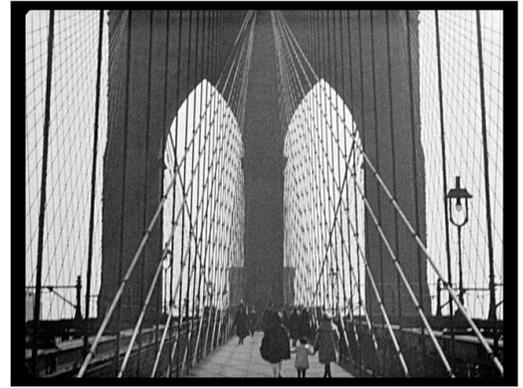


modernist literature and film

*a course on the image of
the modern city*

The Writing Seminars at
Johns Hopkins University

Fall 2019



Instructor Information

Kyle Stine, PhD

Film and Media Studies Program

Office: Gilman 65

Hours: Wednesday, 1–3 p.m. and by appt.

kylestine@jhu.edu

Course Information

AS.220.221

Modernist Literature and Film

3 credits

Gilman 134

F 1:30–4:00 p.m.

Course Description

Centered on the four cities of London, New York, Saint Petersburg, and Paris in the 1920s, this course explores the exchange of ideas and techniques between literary modernism and modernist cinema, drawing from novels, essays, poems, and films by Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Claude McKay, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Andrei Bely, Sergei Eisenstein, Dziga Vertov, John Dos Passos, Zora Neale Hurston, Paul Strand, Franz Kafka, and Louis Aragon.

The course is designated as writing intensive. In fulfillment of the criteria for the writing requirement, assignments will total twenty pages of completed work over the course of the semester. Two times during the semester you will have the opportunity to revise a draft after receiving feedback and before submitting the paper for a grade. Besides regular office hours, you will have two opportunity to meet in conference with me two times during the semester. At these times I will offer extended office hours and be available to talk in detail about your writing, from technical aspects such as grammar and citation to creative considerations such as style and voice. See <https://krieger.jhu.edu/ewp/writing-requirement/>.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

- Gain facility with the key terms modernism and modernity.
- Acquire perspective on the modern city and how its features and rhythms influenced the creative pursuits of novelists, poets, photographers, and filmmakers.
- Develop a critical and historical perspective on the cultural values expressed in literature and film involving issues of race, gender, class, and sexuality.
- Cultivate skills in textual analysis.
- Engage in the practice of writing to improve the clarity, force, and impact of ideas.
- Develop editing skills through the process of feedback and revision.

Course Materials

Aragon, Louis. *Paris Peasant*. [1926]. Translated by Simon Watson Taylor. Boston: Exact Change, 1994.
Bely, Andrei. *Petersburg*. [1913]. Translated by Robert A. Maguire and John E. Malmstead. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018.
Dos Passos, John. *Manhattan Transfer*. [1925]. Boston and New York: First Mariner Books, 2000.
Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. New York: Harcourt, 1925.

Films on DVD are on reserve at the library and can be checked out for four hours at the Service Desk. Please note that we do not have a screening time for this class, a choice I made because our dual focus on writing and film limits our need for a full run of screenings. However, this means that you may periodically need to watch films outside of class.

Evaluation

Grades will be based on completion of all assignments, active and constructive participation in class discussions, and high-level creative and academic thought.

A (93–100): Exemplary
A- (90–92): Excellent
B+ (87–89): Strong
B (83–86): Good
B- (80–82): Satisfactory

C+ (77–79): Adequate
C (73–76): Acceptable
C- (70–72): Minimally Acceptable
D (60–69): Unsatisfactory
F (59–0): Failure

Assignments

Attendance and Participation (20 points)

Attendance is required for all discussions and in-class screenings, and students earn participation points for attending class and engaging in discussions. The Writing Seminars policy is to fail a student who misses more than two weeks of a course due to unexcused absences. Two unexcused tardy arrivals to class will result in the recording of an unexcused absence. Students who have flu symptoms should not attend class and should isolate themselves to the extent possible until they have been fever-free for twenty-four hours. Religious holidays are valid reasons to be excused from class. Students who must miss a class because of a religious holiday must inform the instructor as early in the semester as possible to be excused from class or to make up any work that is missed. Students who must miss class should contact a classmate for lecture notes and information before contacting the instructor with any questions.

Paper 1, 3–4 pages (15 points)

Mrs. Dalloway and Modernist Literature. The goal of the first paper is to establish an understanding of the key terms modernism and modernity and the techniques of literary modernism, such as emphasis on the new, rejection of tradition and authority, belief in innovation and experimentation, distrust of the unified self, collapse of interior and exterior, and use of fragmentation, juxtaposition, and stream of consciousness. What is modernity? What is modernist literature? How is London modern? And how is *Mrs. Dalloway* modernist? Due Monday, September 16 by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard.

Paper 2, 5–6 (20 points)

Word, Image, City. The goal of the second paper is to consider the affordances and constraints of different materials of expression, in this case words and images. The modern city, teeming with movement and possibility, is a difficult figure to express, and in trying to capture its speed, complexity, and plenitude, artists of all stripes resorted to experimentation, laying bare some of the strengths and weaknesses of their chosen art forms. What are the limits of words, and how do authors call upon effects of the image to creatively extend the possibilities of prose? What are the limits of images, and how do filmmakers frame meaning through linguistic devices? What strategies do modernist novels and films share in common? Your paper should focus on one text from the New York section, but you can also draw freely from the texts and films within that section. Draft of paper 2 due Monday, October 14 by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard, with the revised paper due October 21 by 5:00 p.m. Meetings to discuss papers October 14–17.

Paper 3, 5–6 (20 points)

The City as Imagined, Planned, and Built in Word and Image. Same as the last paper, but this time with Saint Petersburg.

Considering also Bely's experimentation with the lines between internal thought and external world, the built environment of the modern city and the collective psychology of its inhabitants, how does the act of writing itself constitute a form of world building? How is writing a novel like building a city? How do the books and films from the Saint Petersburg section make the city seem alive and inseparable from the words written about it and the images captured of it? Due Friday, November 15 on Blackboard before class.

Paper 4, 7–8 (25 points)

The goal of the final paper is for you to gain experience crafting your own topic using the texts from class. This is your opportunity to follow the interests you have developed over the course of the semester. Papers topics could include comparisons between novels, between novels and films, and between films; deep dives into the textual analysis of a single novel or film; and creative, lyric essays in the style of Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, and more recently Claudia Rankine. Three-page draft due Monday, December 2 by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard. Meetings to discuss papers December 3–6. Complete final paper due date TBD.

Academic Integrity

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student conduct (or designee) by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 410-516-8208 or via email at integrity@jhu.edu. For more information, see the Homewood Student Affairs site on academic ethics: (<https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/student-life/student-conduct/academic-ethics-undergraduates>) or the e-catalog entry on the undergraduate academic ethics board: (<http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/student-life-policies/#UAEB>).

Disability Services

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class must obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, 410-516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

The Counseling Center

If you are struggling with anxiety, stress, depression or other mental health related concerns, please consider visiting the JHU Counseling Center. If you are concerned about a friend, please encourage that person to seek out their services. The Counseling Center is located at 3003 North Charles St. in Suite S-200 and can be reached at 410-516-8278 and online at <http://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/counselingcenter/>.

Schedule

The Modern City in Literature and Film

Aug. 30 Defining the modern novel; recommended readings on Blackboard: Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction"; T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent"; Claude McKay city poems: "Cities," 223; "Petrograd: May Day, 1923," 230–231; "Paris," 231–232; "London," 232; and "New York," 239–240, available at <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/23682/>

London, 1919–1925: The Sensations of the City in Photographic Detail

Sept. 6 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 1–100
Julia Stephen as an artist's model for Julia Margaret Cameron; London in the photography of O. G. Rejlander and Jacob Riis; in-class screening of Claude Friese-Greene's *The Open Road* (1925, 10m); recommended reading: Virginia Woolf, "The Cinema" and Maggie Humm, "Virginia Woolf and Visual Culture"

Sept. 13 Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 100–194

Paper 1 due Monday, September 16 by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard.

New York, 1921–1927: Sights, Smells, Skyscrapers, Crowds

- Sept. 20 John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, 3–106
From pictorialism to modernism; photography of New York by Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, Edward Steichen, and Aaron Siskind; Strand and Sheeler, *Manhatta* (1921); King Vidor, *The Crowd* (1928)
- Sept. 27 John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, 109–227
- Oct. 4 John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, 231–342
- Oct. 11 Zora Neale Hurston, Harlem Stories: "The Book of Harlem," "Money Junk," "The Back Room," "The Country in the Woman," and "She Rock"; Claude McKay, "Note of Harlem," "Harlem," "Lenox Avenue," 235–238, available at <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/23682/>
Available at <https://www.jstor-org.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/stable/41158707>
Harlem photography of James Van Der Zee and Gordon Parks

Draft of paper 2 due Monday, October 14 by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard, with revised paper due October 21 by 5:00 p.m. Meetings to discuss papers October 14–17.

Saint Petersburg, 1905–1927: Russian Symbolism before Soviet Montage

- Oct. 25 Andrei Bely, *Petersburg*, ix–xlvii, 1–38
Recommended reading: *The Bronze Horseman*, http://petersburg.berkeley.edu/stiliana/stil_stop2.html
- Nov. 1 Andrei Bely, *Petersburg*, 39–100
The 1905 Russian Revolution in Bely's novel and Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925, 75m)
- Nov. 8 Andrei Bely, *Petersburg*, 101–226
- Nov. 15 Andrei Bely, *Petersburg*, 227–308
In-class screening of Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929, 68m); clips from Vsevolod Pudovkin's *The End of St. Petersburg* (1927) and Sergei Eisenstein's *October: Ten Days That Shook the World* (1928)

Paper 3 due Friday, November 15 on Blackboard before class.

Paris, 1822–1926: Surrealism and the Arcades

- Nov. 22 Aragon, *Paris Peasant*, 5–111; Benjamin, *Arcades Project* excerpts (Blackboard)
Photography of Eugène Atget, Brassai, Dora Maar, Man Ray, and René Magritte; recommended background on Paris passages: <https://www.nga.gov/features/marville/the-passages-of-paris.html>
- Dec. 6 Aragon, *Paris Peasant*, 112–205
In-class screening of René Claire's *Paris qui dort* (1924, 35m) and Alberto Cavalcanti's *Rien que les heures* (1926, 45m).

Paper 4 three-page draft due Monday, December 2 by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard. Meetings to discuss papers December 3–6. Complete final paper due date TBD.