Optional Thinking and Narrative Movies

Semester B’s Subject

Shosh Shaul

Professor: Prof. Nitzan Benshaul

054-4924334
benshaul@post.tau.ac.il

Course:

Course name: Optional Thinking and Narrative Movies

Study hours:

Lab hours: 20%
Motion hours and lectures: 60%

Course objectives:

1. Introduction to optional thinking, narrative and cinematic

2. Optional thinking, philosophy and cinema

References:


--------, (1988), Mystifying Movies, Fads and Fallacies in Contemporary Film Theory, New York: Columbia University Press ( kansze)

Brannigan, Edward (1992), Narrative Comprehension and Film, London: Routledge ( kansze)

Bordwell, David (1985), Narration in the Fiction Film, Wisconsin University Press ( kansze)

Tan, Ed (1996), Emotion and the Structure of Narrative Film, Mahwah, NJ: LEA Publishers ( kansze)


Shklovsky, V. (1928) 'Art as Technique', in Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays, Translated by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reiss, London: University of Nebraska Press, 1965: 3-25


Optional thinking refers to the ability to entertain optional reasons, consequences or solutions to problems. Its impediment derives from the biasing of cognitive processes that lead to "close-mindedness" (Kruglanski). Based upon a cognitive-psychological approach to popular movies, it will be claimed that most such movies impede optional thinking and encourage close-mindedness given their narrative structure and use of strategies of suspense, surprise, and point of view deployment. Other approaches to the engendering of optional thinking in films will be critically assessed (namely, formalism, neo-Marxism and postmodernism). Finally, the identification of optional thinking encouragement in some popular narrative movies will be discussed. Among the films to be discussed are "Duel" (Spielberg), "The Sixth Sense" (Shimalyan), "Wavelength" (Snow), "Le Chinoise" (Godard), "Exzistenze" (Kronenberg), and "Inglorious Bastard" (Tarantino).