

Filming Aotearoa/New Zealand: National Cinema & Post-Coloniality

(LTWL 172GS)

“Filming Aotearoa/New Zealand” (LTWL 172GS) would focus on the history and development of the New Zealand’s national film industry, with particular attention to indigenous Māori filmmaking. The course would pair work such as Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* and more mainstream New Zealand films like *The Piano* (Jane Campion), with post-colonial theory such as Partha Chatterjee’s *The Nation & Its Fragments* and excerpts from Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay’s *Our Own Image* (including his concept of a Fourth Cinema). Making distinct use of the city of Wellington and its central position in the New Zealand film industry, we would plan to visit the [Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision](#) archives and the New Zealand Film Commission, and explore film studios that are sites of global productions such as *King Kong* and *Lord of the Rings*. Through watching theoretical texts, delving into the works of New Zealand filmmakers such as Campion and Taika Waititi, studio tours, and learning about the archiving (and the politics of archives) of New Zealand’s film history, this course would explore national film at the nexus national identity, colonization, indigenous filmmaking and activism, and globalization.

Course Goals:

- Develop critical and close reading analysis skills, especially in reference to questions of genre and genre conventions of the New Zealand and Māori national cinemas.
- Understand the historical, social, and political contexts for the emergence of differing genres and styles of filmmaking.
- Read and apply film theory in appropriate and productive ways, including being able to understand and critique theories of nationalism.

Assignments:

Synthesis Papers (3 total; 10% each = 40%): Each week students will write short response papers that synthesize the week’s screenings and readings. (Word count 500-700 words)

Final Paper (40%): Revise & Expand one of the synthesis papers, using feedback from professor and peers. This paper will also incorporate additional information from the course, asking students to integrate readings and screenings across the course. In it they will have the opportunity to explore a topic of their choice and do a little independent research.

Participation (20%): Students will be graded on how they participate in class (whether they are prepared, attentive, and engaged in the course discussions). Students will also bring daily discussion questions based on the reading and screenings and may lead discussions.

Course Calendar

Week 1: Birth & Rise of NZ Industry & the NZ Film Commission

Monday: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Intro

Tuesday: [Partha Chatterjee, “Whose Imagined Community?”](#) & TBD article on NZ History

Wednesday: : Pick Films from [here](#)

Thursday: Excursion

Due Friday by 11:59pm: Synthesis Paper #1

Week 2: Māori Filmmaking

Monday: : Barry Barclay, [“An Open Letter to John Barnett”](#) & Introduction to [Our Own Image](#)
(Clips *Whale Rider* (2002))

Tuesday: Watch: Barry Barclay movie TBD

Wednesday: Brendan Hokowhitu, “Theorizing Indigenous Media” & Barry Barclay,
& Stuart Murray, [“Indigenous Self-Expression: Outlining Fourth Cinema”](#)

Recommended: [“ASSERTING FEMINIST CLAIMS WITHIN MĀORI CULTURE: WHALE RIDER \(Nicki Caro, 2002\)](#) (pp. 148-160)

Thursday: Excursion

Week 3: NZ Auteurs: Jane Campion

Monday: Andrew Sarris,

Tuesday: TBD Article on NZ Gothic & Campion

Wednesday: *The Piano* OR *Top of the Lake*

Thursday: Weekend Excursion

Due: Summary & Synthesis Paper #2

Week 4: NZ Auteurs, Part II: Taikia Waititi

Monday: [Alistair Fox](#) “PARENTAL ABANDONMENT AND THE TRAUMA OF LOSS: BOY” (pp. 189-202) & TBD article

Tuesday: *Boy* (2010)

Wednesday: *Hunt for the Wilderpeople*

Thursday: Excursion

Due: Final Paper Proposal

Week 5: Wellywood, Diaspora, & Global Film Production

Monday: TBD Article on Transnational Cinema/Globalization

Tuesday: *Lord of the Rings* OR *King Kong*

Wednesday: TBD Essay from [*Migrant and Diasporic Filmmaking in in New Zealand*](#)

Watch: *My Wedding and Other Secrets* (2011)

Thursday: Excursion

Friday: Due by 11:59pm Final Paper