2015-2016 Academic Year

ENGL 378

Documentary and Docudrama  (3 credits)

Instructor: Daniel Keyes
Section:
Term: 1

Description
In the context of mass culture where “reality” television genres dominate commercial television offerings, this course investigates the reality effect of “film” by tracing its origins in the genres of documentary and docudrama. This course examines histo-photography –how history is shown, narrated, framed, edited with celluloid and now digital technologies. The first few weeks of this course investigate how the conventions of photographic realism and stage naturalism evolved via technological advances in photography and theatre. We will sample a 19th century play by Dion Boucicault to explore how documentary, docudrama, and melodrama are bound together via technologies. In subsequent weeks, we will first examine early “primitive” documentary and historical docudrama and then move from modern to postmodern examples of these genres.

Tentative Reading List:

All readings for this course will be provided online via Blackboard Connect’s link to the library course reserves. Here is a short list of readings. Note: you will also be expected to screen certain feature length films outside of class time.