

Psychology for Screenwriters

Instructor: Office Hours
Office: Monday:
Phone: Tuesday:
e-mail: Wednesday:
Thursday:

Required Text:

Indick, W. (2004). *Psychology for Screenwriters: Building Conflict in Your Script*. Michael Wiese Productions.

Kaufman, C. & Gondry, M. (2004). *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind: The Shooting Script*. New Market Press.

Recommended Readings:

Campbell, J. (1972). *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. Bollingen Press.

Rank, O. (1981). *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Jung, C. G. (1990). *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. Bollingen Press.

Murdock, M. (1991). *The Heroine's Journey*. Shambhala Press.

Indick, W. (2004). *Movies and the Mind*. McFarland Publishers, Inc.

Objectives

This course will cover the ways that screenwriters can implement various psychological themes, issues and topics in their screenplays. Topics that will be covered include: Freudian themes such as the oedipal complex and ego defense mechanisms, Jungian themes such as the collective unconscious and archetypes, Adlerian themes such as sibling rivalry and the inferiority complex, Eriksonian themes of identity crisis and character development, and an in depth study of the hero archetype based on the classic theories of Otto Rank, Joseph Campbell, and others. This course will impart a deeper understanding of how screenwriters can create lasting and meaningful impressions on film viewers through a deeper understanding of the psychological elements of character development, storytelling, and dramatic conflict, and through their portrayals of psychological issues in film.

Assignments

Every student is required to write a short subject screenplay of approximately 20-45 pages, incorporating some of the material covered in class. Every screenplay will be read by the class and discussed thoroughly. Each student is required to submit detailed constructive criticism and feedback, in writing, for every screenplay written for this course.

Schedule

- Week One: Course Introduction
Readings: Introduction and Chapters 1-3
- Week Two: Neurotic Conflict, the Psychosexual Stages & the Oedipal Complex
Readings: Chapter 4
- Week Three: Ego Defense Mechanisms
Readings: Chapters 5, 8 and 9
- Week Four: Dreamwork, Archetypes & the Collective Unconscious
Readings: Chapters 6 and 7
- Week Five: Identity Crisis and Character Development
Readings: Chapter 10
- Week Six: The Hero's Journey
Readings: Chapter 11
- Week Seven: The Heroine's Journey
Readings: Chapters 12-14
- Week Eight: Life Styles, Sibling Rivalry & the Inferiority Complex
Readings: Chapters 15 and 16
- Week Nine: Existential Conflict and Modern Archetypes
Readings: Conclusion
Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman and Michel Gondry).
- Week Ten: Roundtable Discussion of *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*
Readings: Student Screenplays
- Week Eleven: Roundtable Discussion of Student Screenplays
Readings: Student Screenplays
- Week Twelve: Roundtable Discussion of Student Screenplays
Readings: Student Screenplays
- Week Thirteen: Roundtable Discussion of Student Screenplays
Readings: Student Screenplays
- Week Fourteen: Roundtable Discussion of Student Screenplays
Readings: Student Screenplays
- Week Fifteen: Roundtable Discussion of Student Screenplays
Course Conclusion