

FS 2023 – B.A. Seminar
Visualizing the Gilded Age: Wharton, James and Cinema
Prof. Elisabeth Bronfen
Thursday 14:00 -15:45

The historical TV-Drama *The Gilded Age* (HBO Julian Fellowes) has drawn the world of the boom years in New York City in the 1880s back into focus. In this B.A. research seminar we will look at how 20th and 21st century cinema has revisited the novels by two authors who are famous for their quasi ethnographic depiction of this historical period, during which those who had come to profit from the rapid economic growth made a grand display of their wealth, leisure and luxury.

(01) 23 Feb Meet & Greet: Introductions and course organization.

Henry James

- (02) 2 Mar How to read cinematic language:
“Turn of the Screw” (1898)
Jack Clayton: THE INNOCENTS (1961)
- (03) 9 Mar *Washington Square* (1880)
- (04) 16 Mar William Wyler: THE HEIRESS (1947)
- (05) 23 Mar Agnieszka Holland: WASHINGTON SQUARE (1997)
- (06) 30 Mar Jane Campion: THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY (1996)

Edith Wharton

- (07) 6 Apr *House of Mirth* (1905)
- (08) 20 Apr Terence Davies: HOUSE OF MIRTH (2000)
- (10) 4 May *The Age of Innocence* (1920)
- (11) 11 May Martin Scorsese: THE AGE OF INNOCENCE (1993)
- 24 May Farewell-Lecture: *Taking a Bow. Abschlüsse und Neuanfänge bei Shakespeare*
- (12) 25 May Julian Fellowes: *The Gilded Age* (HBO 2022)
- (13) 1 June Wrap Up: What I have learned

Course Requirements

Portfolio (20% of final grade)

Students are required to complete the following tasks as part of the portfolio:

Forum Posts: You must write a preliminary discussion (approx. 250 words) for 8 seminar sessions, to be posted on the course's OLAT Forum by 9 a.m. on Wednesday of the respective week. Contributions should entail a thesis, but could also contain a series of questions, comments, or associations. This should not only help you practice your argumentative skills, but also facilitates class discussion by allowing us to see in what directions you have been thinking while preparing for each session. The point is not to read out what you have written, but using what you have developed in writing, to engage in a dialogue with the other members of the class.

Short Research Paper or Visual Research Essay: Students are required to do background research on the subject of the session assigned to them at the beginning of the semester and to compile this research either in a short, written essay (600-1200 words) or a visual essay (max. 3 min.). They will be asked to speak to the content of their research in the corresponding session (5-10 min.).

Handing in your portfolio: At the end of the semester, please compile the thesis statements you have posted and short research paper/visual essay using *the template provided in the OLAT Materials folder*. Hand in a **printed version** of this portfolio on the last day of the class, **June 1, 2023**.

Final Essay (80% of final grade)

All students should hand in an essay (4000-5000 words) **in printed format** by **October 16, 2023**, to Prof. Elisabeth Bronfen. Either leave it at the secretary's office or send it by post to: Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Bronfen, Ottikerstrasse 18, 8006 Zürich.

The essay should comply with the MLA format and style guidelines (i.e. be typed in a **12p serif font, 1.5-spaced**, have ample margins for comments, page numbers and a title page). There will be no extension of the deadline. **Do not send the essay as an email attachment.**