

050:487

Senior Seminar: The Nexus of Film and Literature

Definition of a pseudo-intellectual: someone who always says "The book was better than the movie"

A problem in most academic film courses is that they are taught exactly like literature courses, with films examined as if they were merely another form of literature. But film is not literature. Literature is little black things called words appearing on somewhat larger, white things called pages. Film is primarily pictorial. It is probably closer to painting than it is to literature. Apples and oranges would not sufficiently describe the difference between film and literature because apples and oranges are both fruit. To eternally say, "The book was better than the movie" is to reveal a certain antiquarian snobbery towards newer art forms and to betray ignorance of both literature and film. Nevertheless, literature and film do influence and inform one another, they do overlap and intersect. This course concerns itself with the place where they overlap and intersect. The books and articles we will read each present a peculiar problem in adaptation, usually from literature to film but sometimes the other way around. I will also share with you some of my own filmmaking experience, and we will have one session of the course at my home in Morristown, the chief set for the Meryl Streep/Renee Zellweger film *One True Thing*.