

Political Science 366
Spring 2018

Advanced Topics in Theory, Media, and Method

Michael J. Shapiro
Mondays 3-5:30 in Saunders 624

The focus of this course is on the intermediation between architecture and cinema. For example in Tomas Alfredson's 2011 film version of the John le Carré spy novel, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (1974) much of the drama occurs within buildings that utilize a variety of architectural barriers to access. To recognize the way architecture functions within the film, one can note the Russian film director, Sergei Eisenstein's cinematic practice in which he endeavored to find practical answers to the problem of how to film a building, how to transform it from a passive setting of the action, into a major agent of the plot. Among the answers Eisenstein got was the need for a "montage effect," which requires an emphasis on "the sequence." So instructed, Eisenstein made architecture one of his major cinematic protagonists by filming its role in narrative sequences. Tomas Alfredson does so as well in his *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*. Throughout the semester, we will read texts that analyze the political thinking inherent in architecture, in cinema, and in the relationships between the two media. And we will watch several films in which architecture plays an important role.

Reading:

There is one required text:

Graham Cairns and Francois Penz, *The Architecture of the Screen* (available in paperback or as an ebook).

Reading/discussion/viewing schedule (TBA):