The Late Great Kate: Katharine Hepburn and an Authentic Life in Film
Instructor: Dr. Suhnne Ahn, Harnwell College House Dean

Ranked by the American Film Institute (AFI) as the “greatest female star in the history of American cinema,” Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003) lived as originally as so many of the heroines she depicted in her movies. This seminar examines a corpus of films and roles that defined the pioneering Hepburn as an actress, a businesswoman, and progressive thinker. This course will also analyze critical and audience reception to gain familiarity with the historical context in which these films premiered throughout the decades. Hepburn’s career will therefore serve as a prism through which students will discuss issues such as the Hollywood studio system, the McCarthy era, the rise of the television industry, the changing role of women in the 20th century, and civil rights in the U.S. Why was Katharine Hepburn considered so unconventional, outspoken, and defiant during her own time? How was she able to ensure her inimitable and enduring legacy?

Included in this course will be a field trip to the Katharine Houghton Hepburn Center at Bryn Mawr College in conjunction with activities from Harnwell College House’s ArtsHouse Residential Program.

Possible video clip if course is listed on the Website
Katharine Hepburn tribute by Anthony Hopkins on Turner Classic Movies (TCM) on YouTube
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2oKNp6_HAI

Class meetings:
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30pm to 3:00pm (or Tuesday evenings from 5:00 to 8:00pm)
Harnwell College House, either seminar Room M-10 or Room 102
Films will be shown weekly in Harnwell College House on Sunday afternoons, at 2:00 pm

Films
Morning Glory (1933) or Little Women (1933)  
Mary of Scotland (1936) or Stage Door (1937)  
Philadelphia Story (1940)  
Bringing up Baby (1938)  
Woman of the Year (1942)  
Song of Love (1947)  
State of the Union (1948)  
Adam's Rib (1949)  
African Queen (1951)  
Summertime (1955)  
Rainmaker (1956)  
Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (1967)  
Lion in Winter (1968)  
Glass Menagerie (1973)  
A Delicate Balance (1973)  
On Golden Pond (1981)

Television presentations
Love Among the Ruins (1975)  
The Corn is Green (1979)  
Excerpts from the Dick Cavett Show and 60 Minutes
Sample Readings

[undecided general text]


“Film Analysis Web Site 2.0” from *Yale Film Studies* found at  
http://classes.yale.edu/film-analysis/


Reviews of films from the *New York Times*

Course Expectations

Assignments will include at least 3 papers growing in length toward a final paper involving some aspect of library research, a journal for notes on films watched, a final presentation

About the Instructor:

Suhnne Ahn is currently the House Dean of Harnwell College House. She also serves on the musicology faculty at Peabody Conservatory, where she has taught since 1997 after completing her Ph.D. from Harvard University. Dr. Ahn’s research focuses on sketch studies in Beethoven’s chamber music and most recently has led her to examine the violin concerti of composers based at the Paris Conservatory during the first part of the 19th century. Her teaching endeavors have included graduate seminars in Brahms Chamber Music, 20th Century Opera, Bach Cantatas and Penn critical writing courses on composer biographies and images of Queen Elizabeth I in film.