

ESSAY # 2: AT THE MOVIES

Your Assignment: Choose one of the following writing prompts:

1. Write an evaluative analysis of a *documentary film* (besides *Sicko*) that seeks to address an issue or problem of some sort. How does it do this? Is it successful? Why or why not? This is more than just a simple review. Though it certainly can contain your opinion, it will also need research, citation, and critical thinking to convey it. You may use any of the essays on *Sicko* as a model. If you would like some documentary film suggestions, please see me.
2. Write an essay about an “iconic” film. This can be any film on the American Film Institute’s “Top 100 Films” list. In your essay, explain why this film is considered so important. Why does it enjoy the status that it does today? Is it deserving of that status? How was/is it a product of its time? What values and cultural ideals does it reflect (or reject)? You may use Whitney Black’s essay on *Star Wars* as a model.
3. Write an essay that explores issues of gender or race (one or the other) in a well-known and/or recent film. Alternatively, you can explore your chosen issue in more than one film if you wish. You may use the essays by Bell Hooks or Mary Beltran as a model.

Some things to consider:

- Make sure your essay has a clear *thesis*. You should know what that is by now.
- Again, though these essays will contain your own thoughts and opinions, they should not be written as simple reviews. Similarly, they should not be *plot summaries* either. A summary of the film’s plot and narrative structure should only take up a small portion of your essay. The rest should be your exploration and analysis.
- **Research Requirement:** Using the databases and techniques demonstrated to you in the library, as well as information gathered from printed materials, cite sources that will enhance and support your information. Some things to consider are:
 - What are some **historical**, and/or **cultural** factors that have influenced this film(s)
 - What background does the film’s director have? Has he or she made films similar to this one?
 - How was this film initially received by audiences and critics? Was it controversial? Try to find critical analyses that differ from each other if possible.
 - Also, try to find other sources related to the film besides reviews. Biographies of directors and books about film history are great places to start!

Proposal:

A *typed* proposal, followed by a *fully annotated* – **MLA formatted** – bibliography on the same page, must be submitted to me next week. It should be constructed as follows:

1. Proposal statement: a paragraph-length summary statement that includes:
 - 1) The film or films you have chosen to write about.
 - 2) Why you chose it/them.
 - 3) How you plan to write about it/them.
 - 4) An idea of what your *thesis* might look like.
2. A *fully annotated bibliography* of **at least one source** pulled from print sources or databases shown to you in the library. Entries from “portal sites”, such as Wikipedia, will *not* be accepted. Your source citation should be followed by a brief summary explaining the source’s usefulness. Your entry should resemble the sample below:

Freidman, Lester D. and Brent Notbham. Steven Spielberg: Interviews. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi , 2000

This book has interviews, spanning three decades, with one of the most successful and beloved directors of all time. Many of the interviews are surprisingly in-depth, including one where Spielberg discusses his Jewish

heritage. It will be a great source to use for my exploration of Spielberg's treatment of the Holocaust in Schindler's List.

Requirements:

1. This essay must be typed. Please do not use font larger than 12 point.
2. It must be 4-6 pages double-spaced.
3. You must cite at least **four separate sources (NOT including the film itself)**, which you must include on a separate "works cited" page. Two of these must be from printed publications (though they can be pulled from the databases shown to you in the library). **Your text should therefore contain a minimum of four in-text citations.** These sources must be compiled properly on a "Works Cited" page following the actual essay itself (note: this is separate from your proposal. If you resubmit your proposal in place of your works cited page, you will be docked in points accordingly).
4. Please include a (good) title.

Your paper will be graded using the following rubric:

Six Trait Writing Rubric

Content – 40 points

Development – 40 points

Organization – 40 points

Voice – 30 points

Convention – 30 points

Citation and Source Integration – 20 points

Total Points = 200

DUE DATES:

Proposal and Annotated Bibliography: Due Thursday November 5th

First Draft for Peer Editing: Due Thursday, November 19th

Final Draft Tuesday, November 24th