

SYLLABUS
TFM 462 Documentary: History and Theory
Wednesday 4:00—6:40 Little Theater
Fall 2008

FLAHERTY, VÉRITÉ and BEYOND

Ralph Waldo Emerson: "No man can quite emancipate himself from his age and country, or produce a model in which the education, the religion, the politics, messages and the arts of his time shall have no share."

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Explorations

Courses that fulfill the 9-unit requirement for Explorations in General Education take the goals and skills of GE Foundations courses to a more advanced level. Your three upper division courses in Explorations will provide greater interdisciplinary, more complex and in-depth theory, deeper investigation of local problems, and wider awareness of global challenges. More extensive reading, written analysis involving complex comparisons, well-developed arguments, considerable bibliography, and use of technology are appropriate in many Explorations courses.

This is an Explorations course in the Humanities and Fine Arts. Completing this course will help you to do the following in greater depth: 1) analyze written, visual, or performed texts in the humanities and fine arts with sensitivity to their diverse cultural contexts and historical moments; 2) describe various aesthetic and other value systems and the ways they are communicated across time and cultures; 3) identify issues in the humanities that have personal and global relevance; 4) demonstrate the ability to approach complex problems and ask complex questions drawing upon knowledge of the humanities.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Is fact stranger than fiction? Can we tell the difference? The goal of this course is to familiarize students with documentary history, theory, criticism and practice.

The ability of the cinema to simulate reality has stimulated the creative energies of filmmakers for over one hundred years. From the simple "actuality" of the Lumiere Brothers (*Workers Leaving the Factory*) to the theatrical "reality" of Errol Morris (*The Thin Blue Line*) documentaries challenge audiences to re-envision the world. What are the techniques and tools of documentary expression? Are documentaries art? Propaganda? This course challenges students to develop a critical eye, and to deepen their appreciation of the documentary vision.

Works screened survey the range of documentary expression including the classics, as well as examples of challenging work by independent film and videomakers. We will consider the documentary as an art form; as a cultural artifact; as political expression; and as an economic enterprise.

Add/Drop

Students have fifteen (15) days to add/drop/change grading basis or withdraw from the university. Criteria for dropping a class will be approved only when there are "verified serious and compelling circumstances." Approval will be made by Registrar's Office.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

This is a writing intensive course. It requires closes attention to and analysis of Screenings, Readings, Lectures and Discussions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course students should be able to:

- * Identify and explain the formal elements and grammar of the documentary.
- * Accurately describe the development of documentary practices.
- * Write a critical analysis of documentary and nonfiction films.

EVALUATION

Weekly Reports 35%

Each week's film must be discussed in terms of the **Readings and lectures**. (At least 2 double-spaced typed pages.) **14 reports total**. (2.5 possible points for each paper) Be sure to make reference to all the films screened. Take care to compare and contrast them.

Extra Credit In addition one documentary film viewed **outside of class may be** compared to films screened in class for up to 2.5 points. (You may not use the same film that you use for the midterm or the final paper.) 2.5%

Mid-Term Examination 30%
This is a take home exam. It is due in class on 10/17/07. No exceptions permitted.

Final Paper
Thesis Statement, Sentence Outline, Draft Works Cited 5%

Research paper. A 5-8 page (double spaced, typed) footnoted critical study of a specific documentary film. See attached rubric. 30%

All due dates are final. Late work will not be accepted.

PLAGIARISM

Students should be especially careful to avoid “borrowing” from internet sources and each other. There will be “zero-tolerance” for plagiarism. Cheating or plagiarism will result in an “F” for the course and a report to the office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Be sure to cite all of your sources with page numbers and url’s as appropriate.

READINGS

Required

Readings: Packet (RP)
Nichols, Bill *Introduction to Documentary*, Indiana University Press, 2001 (N)
Grant and Sloniowski, eds. *Documenting the Documentary*, Wayne State 1998 (G)

Research Guides

Corrigan, Timothy. *Short Guide to Writing about Film*, 6th Edition HarperCollins, 2007
<http://infodome.sdsu.edu/research/guides/film.shtml>
<http://infodome.sdsu.edu/research/guides/filmcriticism.shtml>
Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film PN1995.9.D6 E53 2006
www.documentary.org IDA Magazine Archive
Jumpcut <http://www.ejumpcut.org/>

Recommended

Aufderheide, Patricia. *Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford Univ Press, 2007
Barnouw, Erik. *Documentary: A History of the Nonfiction Film*, 2nd Revised Edition, Oxford University Press, 1993
Ellis, Jack and Betsy McLane. *A New History of Documentary Film*, Continuum International Publishing Group Inc., 2005
Rosenthal, Alan and John Corner, editors. *New Challenges for the Documentary*, Second Edition, Manchester University Press, 2005.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some of the films screened in this class may contain sexually graphic scenes and/or violent subject matter.

INTRODUCTION: HISTORY, TECHNIQUE AND THEORY

All great fiction films tend toward documentary, just as all great documentaries tend toward fiction." Godard

Class 1

"What is Nonfiction Film? What do documentaries have in common with fiction films? How are the conventions and "language" of film used to create meaning in documentary productions?

Readings:

(RP) Freeman Intro: The Documentary from Flaherty to Vérité and Beyond
(RP) Samsara
(G) Synthetic Vision
(N) What Are Documentaries About?

E resources

Samsara

<http://www.brunofilms.com/samsara.html>

<http://edwebproject.org/sideshow/index.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/cambodia/diary.html>

Screening:

Land without Bread Luis Buñuel Spain 1932 27 minutes TV7104VR

Samsara Ellen Bruno US 29 minutes 1989 TV8331V

Discussion Questions:

What is uniquely cinematic in these films? What forms of expression are used that are unavailable to other art forms? What do these films say about (your notion of) reality? How do these films tell their stories? In whose voice(s)? From what point of view? What techniques do these films employ to get your attention? To persuade you? To convince you of the credibility of the stories they tell. Which film(s)/techniques are the most successful in persuading and convincing you? Why?

IN THE BEGINNING

Class 2

The invention of the motion picture is in many ways a part of the western, scientific obsession with observing nature, analyzing the phenomenal world and replicating experimental results. Cinema with its apparent mastery of time and motion was considered an objective observer ----a transparent window on the world.

Readings:

(RP) What Is Documentary?

(N) Chapter 5 “How Did Documentary Filmmaking Get Started?”

(G) “Peace Between Man and Machine

Screening:

Lumiere shorts France 1895 excerpts VTC-291 (40:00)

The Man with the Movie Camera 68 minutes Dziga Vertov USSR 1929 DVD-2410 Alloy Orchestra

Discussion Questions:

How are the Lumieres’s films limited in their “documentation” of events? What formal or technical limitations are there in this work? Despite their limited “film grammar,” what might have been the impact on audiences 100 years ago? Do the films offer us anything today? What?

Is Vertov passively recording reality? Is he a "monomaniacal formalist?" Is the film manipulated technically to make story points? How? In what way does this film conform or challenge your notions of “documentary filmmaking?”

Class 3

Since Flaherty the exotic, the other has held a special fascination for documentarians. Visual anthropologists have used film to document their work and "subjects." Questions regarding authorship and the (inherent) power discrepancy between observers and observed are critical to the consideration of these films. The ethics of documentary making ----the multiple responsibilities to participants, audiences and to the filmmaker him or herself---are raised here.

Readings:

(RP) *Nanook of the North*

(G) The Filmmaker as Hunter

Screenings: *Nanook of the North* Robert Flaherty 1922 69 min DVD-865

Nanook Revisited 1994 60 minutes TV7487V

(See *The Fast Runner*, Zacharias Kunuk_2001 for a contemporary fictional Inuit film made by an Inuit director.)

Discussion Questions:

What did you make of the film? How do you think audiences would have reacted to it in 1922? In what ways does it still seem fresh. (I think the easy affection among Nanook's family is appealing in a timeless way.) How did you evaluate the "truth" of the images you were presented with?

Flaherty claimed that it was necessary to "lie" in order to tell a "higher truth." What do you think he meant by this? Give examples from the film that seem to be reconstructions? How can you tell? How do you evaluate Flaherty's attitude toward the Inuit? Give examples from the film supporting your point of view. What did *Nanook Revisited* add to your understanding of *Nanook*?

REPORTS FOR CLASSES 1 AND 2 DUE

DOCUMENTARIES AND PROPAGANDA

The classics of nonfiction filmmaking defined the techniques of documentary as filmmakers were mobilized for total war.

Class 4

What is Propaganda?

Readings:

(RP) Freeman and others

(G) The Mass Psychology of Fascist Cinema and Documenting the Ineffable

Screenings:

Toons at War (Excerpt) Warner Bros 1941-1943 90 minutes Excerpts

Triumph of the Will 1935 (Excerpt) *Leni Riefenstahl* 122 minutes Excerpts DVD-176

Why We Fight The Nazis Strike (Excerpt) 1943 Frank Capra, Anatole Litvak VTC-1601 tape 2

Night and Fog Alain Resais, 1955 30 minutes DVD-953

Discussion Questions:

What is the period and setting of these films? How is this signaled? Describe the use of sound effects and music. How is language used? Consider tone, volume, delivery, pacing etc. Is it realistic or not? How would you describe it? What's the dramatic effect of the way language is used here?

All of these films except *Night and Fog* are propaganda. Explain and discuss this distinction. Does a strong point view in itself make a film propaganda? Is it always necessary to tell “both sides?” Do you imagine that these films would have been effective in persuading audiences at the time they were first produced? Why/why not? Identify contemporary examples of propaganda in nonfiction and fiction. How are they similar to and/or different from these films? What makes contemporary propaganda effective in persuading today’s audiences? (Be sure to reference the definition of propaganda in the reader.)

PERFORMATIVE DOCUMENTARY

Class 5

Readings:

(RP) Handouts and Riggs

(RP) Coco Fusco, “The Other History of Intercultural Performance.”

(N) What Gives Documentary Films a Voice of Their Own?

(G) Silence and Its Opposite

Screening:

Tongues Untied Marlon Riggs 1989 55 min VTC-1782

The Couple in the Cage: A Guatinatei Odyssey Coco Fusco and Paula Herdia 32 min VTC-3600

Discussion Questions:

Tongues Untied present a point-of-view not typically seen. Did you learn new factual information? Does the film express attitudes or values unfamiliar to you? Were your values confirmed, challenged, offended? Describe your own emotional reaction to the film. Give examples. Describe the technical and filmic devices used in the film. Were they effective? Why? How? In what sense is this very personal film political? What is the relationship between personal identity and political movements?

Compare and contrast the presentation of the “other” in *The Couple in the Cage* and in the *Lumiere Shorts* screened in Class 2. In what ways are the similar or different? Has 100 years of film experience changed the way audiences respond to these images? Discuss the range of reactions of audiences portrayed in *Couple* and your own reactions.

REPORTS FOR CLASSES 3 AND 4 DUE

HISTORY AND COMPILATION FILMS

Class 6 FILMS, TELEVISION AND WAR

Readings:

- (RP) “We Aren’t on the Wrong Side, We Are the Wrong Side”
“How TV Covers War”
Clippings

Screening: *Hearts and Minds* Peter Davis 1974 112 minutes DVD 699

Discussion Questions:

Summarize the argument (not the “plot”) of *Hearts and Minds*. How does the filmmaker assert a point-of-view? What is it? How does Davis structure the film for maximum emotional impact on the viewer? Give examples. What was the most effective/convincing sequence? Why? The least effective? Discuss the relationship of sound and image; the camera angle; and the juxtaposition of shots, etc. Are the techniques and arguments of the film persuasive to you? Why or why not? Give examples and discuss the use of propaganda in the war against terrorism and/or the war in Iraq. How is this similar to other war films we’ve screened?

TAKE HOME MIDTERM AVAILABLE DUE IN 2 WEEKS

Class 7 (RE)SCREENING: HISTORY

Readings:

- (RP) Freeman Atomic Café The Archives Project
(N) What Types of Documentary Are There? [Modes]

Screening:

Atomic Cafe Kevin Rafferty, Jayne Loader, Pierce Rafferty 1982 88 min. VTC-2762

Discussion Questions:

The Atomic Cafe is a compilation film. How does it create new meanings from pre-existing films? What techniques and devices are used? Were the original materials propaganda? Is Atomic Cafe propaganda? Explain. In what way(s) is film history?

REPORTS FOR CLASSES 5 AND 6 DUE

THE OBSERVER AND THE OBSERVED

Class 8

MIDTERM DUE

Readings:

- (RP) Freeman *Titicut Follies*
(G) Ethnography in the First Person
(N) Why Are Ethical Issues Central to Documentary Filmmaking?

Screening: *Titicut Follies* Frederick Wiseman and John Marshall US 1967 84 minutes
TV7723V

Cinema Vérité: The Defining Moment Wiseman Clip DV 0105

Discussion Questions:

What were the technical innovations that made cinema vérité and direct cinema possible? Give examples of these techniques and their effects in this film. How would a more traditional filmmaker approach the topic of mental illness? Would a more balanced treatment be preferable? More objective? Why or why not?

Class 9

Readings:

(RP) Sobchack, Vivian. "No Lies: Direct Cinema as Rape," "Blurred Boundaries,"

(N) A Constituency of Viewers p 35

(RP) Daressa and Turner

(RP) Stranger with a Camera

Screening:

No Lies Mitchell W. Block, 1973 16 minutes TV8397V

Stranger with a Camera Elizabeth Barrett 2001 62 minutes TV8338V

Discussion Questions:

Discuss *cinéma vérité's* claim to use the camera to provoke and reveal truth successful? If you were unaware of the fictional nature of *No Lies*, how would you have felt when it was revealed to you? Looking back, what clues within the film might have given it away as fiction? Is it ethical for a filmmaker to manipulate audience expectations in this way? Do you see any positive or negative impacts of this "deception?" How are we as viewers able to evaluate the "truth" of any particular documentary? In particular consider Sobchack's "3 rapes" (page 336) and Nichol's "A Constituency of Viewers" (page 35).

Examine and discuss the issues and ethics of representation raised in these films. Discuss the differences in documentary approach as an "insider" and as an "outsider." What are the advantages and disadvantages of each perspective? Is either perspective inherently more credible? Why or why not?

Optional Proposals for Documentary Production Due

REPORTS FOR CLASSES 7 AND 8 DUE

Class 10

Reading:

(G) "Don't You Ever Just Watch"

Screening: *Dont Look Back* 96 minutes 1967 D. A. Pennebaker DVD-16

For a fictional treatment which borrows from this documentary see *I'm Not There*.

Discussion Questions: Describe and analyze the camera, sound and editing techniques used in this film. How are they different than a traditional journalistic approach to documentary? How is the film similar to or different from current portraits of “bands on the road?” Do you think this style was influential? Why or why not? (Feel free to compare it to other music portrait documentaries you are familiar with, or even a mockumentary like *This Is Spinal Tap*.)

Discuss and analyze the reading’s argument that Pennebaker had a disguised agenda? Do you agree? If the assertion is true, does it change the significance of the film? Your understanding and appreciation of it?

BIOGRAPHIES AND AUTOBIOGRAPHIES (REFLEXIVITY)

Class 11

Readings:

(RP) Freeman Biography

(N) How Can We Write Effectively about Documentary

Recommended: *Short Guide to Writing about Film*

Screening:

Nobody’s Business Alan Berliner 1996 60 minutes TV8315VR

Clips from *My Architect: A Son’s Journey* and *Tell Them Who You Are*

Discussion Questions:

What happens when the filmmaker is the ostensible subject of the film? Is it more or less credible? *Nobody’s Business* reveals (some of) the process of filmmaking. What is left out? What is revealed? Why? What is the effect of this self-consciousness on you as a viewer? On the subjects of the film? How does the filmmaker create a “persona” for himself? Do you find it appealing, convincing? Why or why not? Compare and contrast the personas of the filmmakers and the style and approach taken in the 3 “Father Films.” Which is more effective? Why?

REPORTS FOR CLASSES 9 AND 10 DUE

POINT-OF-VIEW and COMMITTED DOCUMENTARIES

Class 12

Readings:

(RP) *Harlan County* and *Blue Collar Blues* and Resources for Teaching Documentary Film

(N) How Have Documentaries Addressed Social and Political Issues?

Screening: *Harlan County USA* Barbara Kopple 1976 Media Center; 104 minutes DVD-2520

Discussion Questions:

A politically committed film like *Harlan* makes no pretense of neutrality or objectivity.

Is this an advantage or disadvantage -- for the filmmaker? For audiences? To a concern for truth?

Does a story have to tell both sides in order to be truthful? Should *Night and Fog* (one of the first

explorations of the death camps) include the Nazi point-of-view? Is the film too emotional? Does it romanticize, idealize the miners and their wives? Why are working class stories like Harlan seldom seen on film or television?

PAPER TOPICS AND OUTLINES DUE

BORDERS AND BOUNDRIES: Documentaries, Docudrama, Entertainment and Pseudo Documentaries

Class 13

Readings:

(RP) Joan Mellon, "Filmguide to The Battle of Algiers" Klawans, Stuart "Lesson's of the Pentagon's Favorite Training Film"

Screening: *Battle of Algiers Italy/Algeria* 1967 122 min DVD 837 c.2 and Guide

Discussion Questions:

What techniques does the filmmaker use that are derived from documentary practice? How does the filmmaker use narrative techniques common to fictional films to build suspense? To build sympathy for the Algerians? Consider how the film and its depiction of terrorism were received in 1967 in the context of anti-colonial liberation struggles? How do you make sense of this film and its messages today in the context of the "war against terrorism" and the war in Iraq?

REPORTS FOR CLASSES 11 AND 12 DUE

Class 14

Readings:

(RP) Freeman and Resources for Teaching Documentary Film

(G) Mirrors without Memories

Screening:

Thin Blue Line Errol Morris US 1988 101 min VTC-1791

Discussion Questions

Is this a documentary? Why? Why not? How is it different from "traditional documentaries?" Is objectivity an important concern of this film? Truth? Is the filmmaker fair to his subjects? Why or Why not? What is the impact of the re-enactments on you? What techniques are used? Discuss the implications of the use of fictional techniques in a "serious" documentary.

WHAT'S NEW IS OLD AND

Class 15

Readings:

(RP) Freeman Koyaanisqatsi and Resources for Teaching Documentary Film

Screening: *Koyaanisqatsi* Godfrey Reggio 87 minutes 1983 DVD 351

Discussion Questions

How is the film manipulated technically to make story points? In what way do the techniques used enhance or distort our understanding of the processes of modern life? Are the techniques of the film effective in grabbing our attention? Or has their power been dulled by time and the development of even more eye-catching graphics and special effects? What is the role of "eye-candy" in a documentary? Compare the techniques and point of view of *Koyaanisqatsi* and *The Man with the Movie Camera*. In what ways are they similar? Different?

12/10 REPORT FOR CLASS 13 and 14 DUE

FINAL PAPER DUE

Extra Credit Outside Film Due

Students are expected to attend the Film Finals Festival in Little Theatre 12/18.

SUGGESTIONS OF ADDITIONAL FILMS AND FILMMAKERS

Available in the Media Center at the Library

<http://libpac.sdsu.edu/search/X>

Enter Documentary or the name of the film you are looking for in "Any Field"
Under "Location" Pull Down and choose "Media Center"

Battle of Chile
El otro lado The other side VTC-19
Paris is Burning VTC-1256
The Farmer's Wife VTC-567
Grey Gardens DVD-909
Salesman DVD-908
The War Room VTC-1228
The Wonderful Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl VTC-302

ITS These films can sometimes be called up from ITS and viewed in the Media Center

Absolutely Positive	American Movie
Berlin: Symphony of a Great City	Blood in the Face
Best Boy (DVD-1121)	Bushmen of the Kalahari (15794,VH)
Born into Brothels	Bus 174
Celluloid Closet	A Propos de Nice
Chulas Fronteras	
Control Room	Edmund's Island
Eyes on the Prize	Fahrenheit 9/11
Fires in the Mirror	Fog of War
Forgotten Silver	Freedom on My Mind
Garlic is as Good as Ten Mothers	Gimme Shelter
Hoop Dreams	Berkeley in the 60'
Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie	
Let There Be Light	
Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter, The	
Roger and Me	Supersize Me
Talking Peace	The Yidishe Gauchos
Times of Harvey Milk	Trembling before g*d
Union Maids	Warrior Marks
Working Girls War Room, The	

More Films:

Gypsy Caravan	Protagonist	Czech Dream
Lessons in Darkness	Streetwise	The Staircase
Looking for the Wrong-Eyed Jesus	The Gleaners	Murderball
My Kid Could Paint That	What I Want My Words To Do To You	
Into Great Silence	What Would Jesus Buy?	
Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter		

462 Weekly Report Rubric

MAKE GRADING EASIER

It's helpful if you incorporate the question in your discussion. But do not copy the questions verbatim.

Required:

Highlight references Use **Bold** for examples from the film(s)

Underlines for references to the reading

Italics for references to class lecture and/or discussion

Feel free to use colored ink or highlighters as well.

2.5 Total possible points per report Emailed and Late papers are not accepted.

Qualitative

A. Thorough, insightful more than a simple response to the questions; well-written, a clear and concise analysis; examples from the films and multiple references to lectures and readings.

B. Generally a good job. But not thorough, missed the point; didn't refer sufficiently to the discussion questions, Readings and lectures.

C. Relied on plot summaries; substituted personal opinion for analysis. Confused the films.

F Late

Quantitative Points

Addressing the discussion questions and comparing and contrasting the week's films

.5 2-3 pages marked with **bold**, underline and *italics* as described above (required.) Longer responses are permitted.

.5 Using several specific and appropriate references to **scenes in the films.**

.5 Using several specific and appropriate references to the *lecture and class discussion* as they relate to the discussion questions.

1 Using specific and appropriate references to all of the readings (3 and often more) as they relate to the discussion questions. Be sure to specifically identify the source e.g. (Nichols) or (RP) in your paper. (It is not sufficient to mention the RP and overlook the essay in Grant for example.)

These response papers should be well-reasoned "arguments" supported by evidence from the films, lectures and the readings. The tone should be academic, not casual or conversational. The most challenging part of the assignment is the readings. To receive full credit, the work needs to reference all the readings in a given week. A few "random" sentences are not sufficient. The idea

is to demonstrate familiarity and engagement with the readings. The use of quotations demonstrates your understanding of the material. This does not mean lengthy quotations of half a page. Quotations that support an interpretation or clarify the meaning of the film are expected, rather than facts ("1/4 of the population was killed.")

Please take care with the mechanics of writing, word use, spelling and grammar.

Final Research Paper

Preliminary Work (5 points)

- Thesis Statement (2 Points)
- Sentence Outline with a clear beginning, middle and end (2 Points)
- MLA Works Cited (Draft) (1 Point)

Points to Consider

Choose a documentary film you are excited about, and one that you are willing to watch at least 2 or 3 times. See the list in the syllabus for suggestions. Choose a film and filmmaker that have attracted sustained critical attention. It will be difficult to find research sources for a film that is too new or too obscure.

If you choose one of the top 100 films listed in the reading packet it is more likely that you will be able to find appropriate critical support for your argument.

You may not choose a film screened in class, analyzed in the midterm, or used for extra credit.

Thesis

Develop a thesis — an argument and analysis.

Thesis Examples:

1. *Atomic Café* is limited by its style, technique, point of view and funding sources. It is not a reliable guide to US Nuclear Weapons policies during the Cold War.
2. Or conversely, *Atomic Café* with its compelling style and compilation technique, convincingly demonstrates that US nuclear weapons policy was based on fear, manipulation and false information.

It may help to review some critical articles. Often the controversies raised in discussions of the film are a suggestive of a possible thesis.

Consider the subject of the film. You need outside sources to provide sufficient cultural, historical, social and/or economic context to evaluate film under discussion. If you didn't know the history of the Cold War, it would be difficult to evaluate *Atomic Café* as the passing of time affected reception of the film. (T 1, 2, and 3)

Don't spend too much time on reiterating plot. Refer to the story primarily in so far as it reveals or reflects ideas. We're interested in examining the portrayal and representation of values and behaviors.

Analyze the film and discuss issues that we have considered in class. The list is suggestive. Not every paper will cover all of these points.

- Relationship of filmmaker, subjects and community
- The style and technique--- the way the elements of the film make it more or less successful in communicating its ideas and feelings
- Modes
- Story Structure
- Style and Approach
- Credibility
- Ethics
- Overall Impact
 - a: Subjects
 - b: The public
 - c: Critics and academics
 - d: The use of the film – theaters, tv, classroom, organizing

Marshal evidence to support your argument. Examine the authors of the film typically the director. How does the film fit with his or her body of work?

Your thesis statement accounts for an examination and analysis of both the "facts" of the film and the techniques used in the film. You need to demonstrate that your thesis is sustainable not only by the content presented in the film, but also by the techniques the filmmaker uses.

The thesis is followed by a sentence outline of your paper. Specifically how will you develop the arguments in support of your thesis.

Finally add a draft of "works cited" to include 5 credible sources of analysis.

Scholarly work from books and academic journals, and critical articles in periodicals like *Cineaste* are expected. Note that Nichols, Grant and the Reading Packet do not count toward the 5 sources.

Resources

Writing about Film Chapter 6 Researching the Movies
Sample Outline p 110; Also see Sample Essays p 96.

Sources

<http://infodome.sdsu.edu/research/guides/film.shtml>

Motion Pictures Periodicals (LC Subject)

This is the subject heading to see the library holdings.

Some particularly likely sources for you include:

- *Cineaste*
- *Film & history*
- *Jump Cut*
- *The Video Librarian*

Quoting in MLA Style

See http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04_c08_o.html for more information on document style and more examples of quoting techniques.

Three things happen to all quotes in your papers:

1. They are introduced.
2. They are stated correctly and cited.
3. They are explained, analyzed, and connected to the claim of the paragraph.

Most of your claims should be supported with quotes from the texts you choose. For example, a claim and quote might look something like this:

Jefferson's "Declaration of Independence" presents the speaker as a collective "we" rather than he, himself or even the Continental Congress in order to establish more ethos, or credibility, for the document. When he writes, "We hold these truths to be self evident...", the truths are presented as the beliefs of a large body of people (Jefferson 39). Not until the end of the "Declaration" is the identity of the "we" more clearly established: "We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled...solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right out to be free and independent states" (43). The speaker is designated as...

Parenthetical citation: author's last name and the pg. # are in parenthesis after the quote

- the text is in quotation marks
- ellipses (...) indicate any omissions
- the period follows the parenthesis
- if the author is clear from the surrounding text, you can omit the name
- the citation is usually at the end of the sentence

You must produce a **Works Cited** for all quotes. A correct citation includes: Author, Title, Place of Publication, Publisher, and Date of Publication. Here is the citation for LeGuin:

LeGuin, Ursula. The Dispossessed. New York: Harper, 1974.

SURVEY

This survey is not required. It is designed to give the instructor some additional information about your experience, interests and expectations.

NAME

Occupation (if any besides student)

Age

College Standing: (Freshman etc.)

Academic Major

Have you ever taken a film course? If so, please list.

Please rate your current knowledge (10 = "a great deal").

Film History 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Film Technique 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Documentary Cinema 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please rate your current knowledge of

American History 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Ethnic History 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

American Politics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

"3rd World" History/Culture 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why are you taking this course? What do you expect to learn?

On the other side list three specific topics you would like to have covered during this course.

(Feel free to write additional comments on the back of this form.)

