**Lit 106: Introduction to Film**

**Essay 1** (2-3 pages)

**DUE: March 13th, 2021 at 11:59 pm on turnitin.com**

To submit your paper, go to http://www.turnitin.com.

Class ID: 28093609

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**Goal**: You are expected to explore how a specific filmic technique creates another level of meaning for a scene within a film.

For this essay assignment, please follow these steps:

* Choose a film on which to write. It can be *Public Enemy* if you like, but feel free to pick a film you really enjoy. When making this choice, remember that you cannot assume that your reader has seen the film or is familiar with the scene. You will need to be very precise in your explanations of scenes of the film to avoid losing your reader.
* Choose a film technique (editing, film composition, use of shots (i.e. tracking shots, close-ups), mise-en-scene, sound, etc…) to focus on for the entire paper. Choose only one film technique. Be sure to define this technique at some point early in your paper to demonstrate how you understand it to guide your reader.
* Develop a thesis explaining how this technique creates another level of meaning for the film. You will need to describe exactly what the level of meaning is to ensure a focused paper and to bring your reader along in the essay.
  + Example 1: Stanley Kubrick uses aerial shots to convey a greater supernatural force at work in the Overlook Hotel in the horror film, *The Shining*.
  + Example 2: James Wan’s use of aerial shots and rapid-fire editing sequences creates a general disorientation for the viewer that comments on the incoherence of the world and the precariousness of life in *Furious 7*.
* Develop support paragraphs outlining and supporting this thesis and creating a line of argument. Feel free to use multiple scenes within the same film to prove your point.

At a minimum, your paper should include the following:

* Be 2-3 double-spaced pages with 1” margins.
* A thesis.
* A definition of your chosen film technique.
* Support paragraphs with focused topic sentences organized around ideas that you want to prove in the paragraph. Your topic sentence should not just restate factual evidence from the film, but offer an idea/interpretation that you prove with the rest of your paragraph.
* Conclusion.

Do not use outside sources to help you develop your claims. You need to use MLA citation for this essay if you use a source. Please consult the MLA online handbook on how to cite a film for your Works Cited page. Be sure to include the source for any quotes from the movie that you may use. Most screenplays are available online.

**What is a thesis?**  You may find the following definition helpful:

“Thesis: your main insight or idea about a text or topic, and the main proposition that your essay demonstrates. It should be true but arguable (not obviously or patently true, but one alternative among several), be limited enough in scope to be argued in a short composition and with available evidence, and get to the heart of the text or topic being analyzed (not be peripheral). It should be stated early in some form and at some point recast sharply (not just be implied), and it should govern the whole essay (not disappear in places).” From Gordon Harvey’s, “Elements of the Academic Essay.” Associate Director of Expository Writing Program, Harvard University.

Tips to keep in mind for a thesis:

* “How” and “why” questions generally require more analysis than “who/ what/when/where.”
* Good analytical questions can highlight patterns/connections, or contradictions/dilemmas/problems.
* Good analytical questions can also ask about some implications or consequences of your analysis.

In sum, a thesis raises a question for which your paper provides the answer. Thus the question should be answerable, given the available evidence, but not immediately, and not in the same way by all readers. Your thesis should give at least a provisional answer to the question, an answer that needs to be defended and developed. Your goal in the paper is to help readers understand why this question is worth answering, why this feature of the film or issue is problematic, and how your paper offers a solution.