

Assignment III - Final Paper Proposal

Due: Monday, August 4th, 2014



As you recall from your last two assignments, screening reports are often done as a preliminary activity in preparation for further viewing, writing, discussion, or examinations. Having already completed reports for six highly sophisticated films, you are certainly aware of why this sort of preparation can be so helpful in this regard.

There are several avenues open for further writing about the films that you have seen, and one possibility is probably already quite familiar to you: the **movie review**. Movie reviews are generally aimed at the broadest audience possible, and usually do not assume that this audience will be highly knowledgeable about film. Those who write movie reviews are primarily interested in letting audiences know if the film under review is worth seeing or not, and perhaps why this is so. ***This is not what you will be doing for your final paper.***

Two additional methods of writing about film that are less common are the **critical essay**, and the **theoretical essay**. Often these two approaches to writing about film overlap to a certain extent. In the critical essay proper, writers tend to assume that their reader has seen the work being discussed, and that their audience possess a more sophisticated understanding of film than the typical film goer. What these writers primarily focus on are elements and subtleties of a particular film that have been overlooked or perhaps forgotten. Themes, elements of plot, and other aspects of the work might be addressed to remind the reader of their importance, but the main goal of the essay is usually far more specific.

As you have seen this semester, theoretical approaches to film make use of much of what can be found within the critical essay, yet they do so with the additional aim of saying something about the nature of the medium of film itself, both more broadly and more specifically than what is typical of other approaches. The prefix “meta” is often associated with this approach, as meta-cinematic and meta-filmic approaches tend to approach film in a self-reflective way, and as such, films which are explicitly thematic in this manner are often seen as ideal examples for analysis of this nature. However, if we return to the original sense and meaning of the prefix “meta” as not only referring to elements beyond or outside of a chosen medium, but as also referring to these same elements as found moving in and through the work at hand, it becomes clear that almost every film can be approached in this manner.

Assignment III - Final Paper Proposal
Due: Monday, August 4th, 2014



This semester, we have primarily focused on this meta-cinematic level by addressing the following question: “***What is the relationship between the cinema, perception, and the human body.***” Each week we have addressed this question through a new “lens,” and we have also addressed each theory with the help of appropriate films. These films have allowed us to theorize both about (meta) cinema and through (meta) cinema.

With these things in mind, I would like you to write a short paper proposal which takes into consideration the the theoretical perspective we have worked with over the last few weeks, and to come up with a proposal for your final paper this semester. In order to do so, please follow the steps below in the order in which they are presented:

- 1). Think about the terms, *exhibition*, *orientation*, and *embodiment*, and write down ways that these terms are related to all that we have addressed in response to the above question regarding cinema, perception, and the human body. Pay particular attention to those aspects of film and film theory which most intrigue you, and record your ideas before moving on to step two.
- 2). Try to find examples of particular films or aspects of films that we have watched this semester, which will enable you to clarify what you have written in response to step one. In other words, in the spirit of Giles Deleuze, try to “think” about theory with the help of particular films or specific elements of these films. Please assume that your eventual reader will be familiar with these films, and with film generally.
- 3). In as concise a fashion as possible, please develop a paper proposal of one or two paragraphs, telling me what you would like to write about in light of your completion of steps one and two. Let me know why this approach interests you as it does, and how you intend to effectively communicate your ideas in your essay. Remember that you will ultimately be writing an essay of between six and ten pages in length.
- 4). Include another paragraph or two expressing any other thoughts regarding your proposal which you would like to address if you are not quite sure of how to do so, so that I can provide you with some guidance.

* You may turn your proposal in next week, if you would like to get a head start.