

A photograph is not only an image (as a painting is an image), an interpretation of the real; it is also a trace, something directly stenciled off the real, like a footprint or a death mask.

Sontag, Susan (1933)

US novelist and essayist. *On Photography*, 1977

## ESSAY#2

Write an analytical paper between 5-7 typed pgs. Choose one of the following questions, and frame paper/discourse in standard essay format (i.e. 3 to 5 paragraphs, thesis statement, supporting paragraphs, conclusion/summation).

1. Analyze/discuss the “screwball comedy” genre and its conventions in regards to Some Like It Hot. What are its conventions? When and where does Some Like It Hot break from any of these conventions? How do these conventions inform the structure of film? What is the history/development of the genre?
2. Analyze/discuss Malick’s Badlands from an existentialist point of view? How does the story’s plot, narrative structure and/or form suggest/express this philosophical viewpoint?
3. Write a paper analyzing/interpreting both the use of mise-en-scene and narrative structure in Maya Deren’s Surrealist Meshes of the Afternoon. What motifs and themes can be derived from the film’s mise-en-scene? How does the film’s circular structure inform or work with those motifs and themes? How do these elements function together to inform/create the mood and tone of the film?
4. Analyze The Searchers in terms of how its protagonist Ethan Edwards differs from the conventional heroes of the Western Genre.
5. Analyze From Here to Eternity in terms of how its protagonist Pvt. Robert E. Lee 'Prew' Prewitt differs from the conventional heroes of the War Genre.
6. Analyze High Noon in terms of how its genre conventions. How are these conventions adhered to? When does the film diverge from these conventions? Why is high noon considered a revisionist western?
7. Compare and Contrast The Searchers’ Ethan Edwards and Shane’s Shane in terms of how they function as protagonists in their respective narrative structures and diegesis? - How are their motivations similar/different? Are they both the driving force behind the film’s cause and effect chain? Do they both seek similar resolutions? Do they both serve the same function in their respective communities? Be specific about how and when these similarities or differences are expressed.
8. Analyze/breakdown the narrative structure of Nashville in detail. Known for its loose, interconnecting episodic narrative, over 2 dozen significant characters and overlapping dialogue, Altman’s masterpiece is not in keeping with standard narrative conventions. Describe Nashville’s patterns, narrative arc, temporal and spatial juxtapositions,

motivation, plot, story, subjectivity and objectivity, expectations, privileged view points, exposition, pacing, time, parallel actions, etc.

9. Write a paper discussing and analyzing the techniques of “method” acting as it regards James Dean’s performance in Rebel Without a Cause. What are the techniques? How are they applied? How do they function in juxtaposition to other elements, performances, setting, etc.?
10. Analyze Mallick’s A Thin Red Line in terms of its formalistic and montage elements/devices. What patterns/structures does Mallick use to structure a loose and abstract plot? How do these formalistic elements inform the style? How do these elements/devices differ from the formalistic elements/devices in more conventional war genre films, ones based on a classical paradigm?
11. Analyze and discuss the **realistic** elements of Annie Hall . How are the elements of mise-en-scene employed to promote a realistic style? How is its visual style, camera work, settings, sound, etc. in keeping with more “realist” traditions? Where, when and how does Annie Hall diverge from its “realism”?
12. Zinneman’s From Here to Eternity is atypical of war genre films of its time for its frank portrayal of emotionally complex characters, and explicitly sexual and violent situations storylines. Compare and contrast the relationship between Burt Lancaster (1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Milton Warden) and Montgomery Cliff (Private Prewitt) and Sean Penn (1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Edward Welsh) and James Caviezel (Private Witt). How do these relationships express/demonstrate the film’s themes?
13. Analyze and discuss the formalistic/montage elements of Penn’s Bonnie and Clyde’s climatic death scene and the sequence leading up to it. How are elements of montage employed? Why does it represent such a watershed in the depiction of violence? How’s does this scene function relative to the rest of the film and the way it depicts violence?

## PAPER GUIDELINES \_\_\_\_FILM STUDIES 101

Apos. Use apostrophes to show possession

Awk. Badly constructed sentence

Being avoid using “being”—weakens sentence

Capitalize

Contractions best to write out

Cs. Comma splice-comma between 2 complete sentences delete

! avoid using exclamation mark—make words do the work

Font use standard 12 pt font

frag. Fragment-incomplete sentence

ing verbs avoid ing verbs—use simple active, present tense

v insert missing word

long cut up full-paged paragraphs

paper title be creative-don’t underline, cap., bold, or use quot. marks

symbol for paragraph

? what does this mean exactly?

Quot. marks punctuation inside quot. marks

r.o. run on- no punctuation between complete sentences

; semi-colon—only use between complete sentences

SL do not use slang

Sp incorrect spelling

Spacing no extra space between paragraphs

Staple make sure paper is stapled

Tense use present verb tense for film discussion

Thesis one sentence that describes the purpose of the paper

-often an opinion that can be supported with evidence. Usually found at the end of the first paragraph

Do not spell out intentions. Ex “I will be analyzing...”

Title page do not use title page or folder—title goes on 1<sup>st</sup> page

Unclear construction makes sentence unclear

Underline underline or italicize film titles

v.p. ? over vague pronouns: this, it, he, she, they.

Always make reference clear. Ex. “This shot...”

Verbs use precise verbs ---expand vocabulary---avoid: get, has, is

Wf incorrect word form ex. Anxiety not anxious

Wordy cut out needless deadwood words- they weaken sentences

Ww wrong word

You do not use second per “you”—use 1<sup>st</sup> person “I” or third person  
“the viewer or the audience”