

## ADV3M/4M Film Critique Assignment

Mr. Polidano

Students are required to compose a film critique PowerPoint presentation on one film **from each of the directors examined so far** (3 presentations). Each critique should consist of at least 15 slides, be well written, following standard rules of grammar, and developing consistent, cohesive ideas as the presentation rolls out. Much of your grade will be determined by the clarity and creativity of your presentation. This is a PowerPoint presentation, hence, accompanying images from the film being critiqued is to be expected. Short video clips can also be included if feasible.

What should you talk about? Refer back to the Film Terminology PowerPoint that will be posted at kevinpolidano.com for starters. You might focus on whether the main elements of the film come together to make a coherent, beautiful and moving film. You should probably focus on the following: Does the movie want to be more than an entertainment (ambition)? How strong is the script (and dialogue)? How strong is the acting and characterization? What are the themes/ideas of the movie? Perhaps a bit less important is the plot outline, the visual elements (cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing), sound effects and musical score. I suggest that you read the reviews of the late Roger Ebert at the *Chicago Sun Times*, Vincent Canby and Janet Maslin in the *New York Times*. These reviews will give you a better idea of what you might want to include. Remember that every movie will reach audience members in different ways, so while you might want to talk about the soundtrack and acting, another viewer might have been more attuned to the set design and mood.

Do not limit yourself to *reacting* to the film (“I loved it !”) and do not use generic terms like “incredible,” “wonderful,” “marvelous,” etc. Unlike a review, you should assume that the reader has already seen the movie; **you do not need to give an extensive plot summary; you do not need to hide plot information so as not to spoil the surprise of the viewer; that being said, you do need to be consistently analytical and critical.**

### Use the following scale to rate your movies:

- \*\*\*\* Outstanding movie. It has ambitions to be more than an entertainment. It has a strong script. It is not only well made with elements of poetry (beauty), but it has a strong emotional impact on the viewer. A must-see movie for everyone!
- \*\*\* A good movie that does not have quite the same aesthetic and emotional impact as the previous category. It is an interesting movie. It might be a mainstream movie intended primarily for entertainment, but with strong characters and some serious themes.
- \*\* An acceptable occasion for spending eight bucks. It may, however, be quite ordinary, falling within expected genre boundaries, perhaps depending mainly on star appeal for its audience impact. It is probably well made, but has deficiencies in characterization, script, etc. that are obvious to the discerning viewer.
- \* Poor example of a movie. How could someone spend \$10 million on this turkey? Plot line is predictable or incredible; characters are superficial; dialogue causes sniggering in the audience; actors might be miscast. You would probably walk out.
- None Beneath contempt.

Include Your rating either at the very beginning of the presentation or at the very end.

Your first slide should include the following information: film title and director; earlier work by director, if relevant, scriptwriter and cinematographer, country and year of release, list of main members of the cast. Your second slide should summarize the film's plot or principal action or genre, and act as a transition to the analytical part of the presentation.

### **Referencing Outside Sources**

The opinions expressed in your film critiques should be entirely yours and not those borrowed from a printed or Internet source! **Plagiarism will be severely treated in this class.** If you decide to use information from an outside source, you must use a reference system to credit all the sources you use. Specifically, you must give a reference to your source when you 1) quote verbatim from it; in this case you must put the words quoted in quotation marks; 2) paraphrase a source (i.e., express the same idea in your own words). At the end of your presentation, you must have a 'Works Cited' section in which you list *all* the books, articles, websites, etc. you have used. Every time you quote or paraphrase a statement in your work, make a reference to your source by putting the relevant information (usually name of work, page number, etc.) inside quotation marks. If you have truly not used outside sources in composing your critique, then you must put the following statement at the end of your PowerPoint presentation: "I certify that I have not used outside sources in researching and creating this presentation," and sign your name. **Presentations that do not have either a 'Works Cited' section or the above statement will not be graded.**