

Film 20A: The Film Experience (Fall 2009, UC Santa Cruz)

First Assignment: Sequence Analysis Essay.
Due, Wednesday October 21, 3.30pm, in class.

Maximum 1500 words

ASSIGNMENT:

Write an essay in which you analyze the given sequence closely, explaining how the *mise-en-scène*, cinematography, and editing function together to tell the story and create particular meanings for the viewer.

Your essay should make a simple argument about the sequence, and your analysis should support that argument. For example, you may wish to begin by stating the importance of the sequence in understanding something about the direction of the narrative or the interactions of its characters. You might assert that the sequence is typical of the film's visual style. You might concentrate on the role of the setting, on a pattern of cinematography, or of a particular use of color. Whatever you argue, you should have a simple thesis that enables you to closely analyze how that thesis is supported visually in the sequence. Even if you choose a certain element to concentrate on (for example, camera movements, or blocking) your paper should clearly demonstrate an understanding of its relationship to the other elements of filmic discourse that we have studied.

Your paper should apply the techniques of close analysis that we have learned in class, in the text, and on the DVD-ROM.

You must first prepare a detailed shot-by-shot breakdown of the sequence and submit it to your TA no later than one week before the Assignment due date.

IF YOUR SHOT BREAKDOWN IS NOT RECEIVED, YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO SUBMIT YOUR PAPER AND WILL RECEIVE A FAIL GRADE. Your shot breakdown will not receive its own grade but you will receive feedback on it in section and lecture.

Helpful resources:

- On note-taking and shot breakdown, see Corrigan and White pp 484-85.
- See the notes on our website, on the assignments page:
<http://ic.ucsc.edu/~limbrick/film20a/seqanalaysisnotes.html>
- Your TA and professor: ask questions, go to office hours.

CLIP: *Singin' in the Rain*, dir. Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen, 1952.

DVD cue: 39min 38secs--42mins 35secs (From the dissolve where Kathy and Don start walking, to the end of the shot in which Don says "I'll try.")

DVD 230 (Reserve)

VID 51 (Reserve) *Laser disc*

VID 1236 (Reserve) *Laser disc*

VT 494 (Reserve) *VHS*

A note about YouTube: you are strongly encouraged NOT to use a YouTube clip of the film for this assignment. The quality is not as good and you cannot guarantee that you will find the correct segment that way. The references given above are the only accurate measure of the sequence. You may wish to use a video store or online service to obtain the film, but I recommend the library.

Formal Requirements for Paper:

Approx. 1500 words—that means not significantly more or less.

Use a 12-point font and type your paper

Leave a 1" margin at the left for comments.

Double space, single sided, number your pages, staple upper left corner.

Your name, TA's name, Section time at top of page.

Underline or italicize film titles

No outside reading is required, but if you cite Corrigan and White directly, you need to add a "Works Cited" in accordance with MLA style. See

http://library.ucsc.edu/ref/howto/mla_citations.html

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY:

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty.

Acts of academic misconduct during the course, including plagiarism, will result in failure of the course. Your case will be reported to the College Provost as per the

Academic Integrity guidelines found on the web at:

http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/undergraduate_students/