

Film Rubric

Paper #1. Film Analysis Paper

50 pts

You will be required to historically analyze one film that we watch. You may choose any movie we've watched with the exception of Gladiator. The paper will be due near the end of the trimester.

Each paper should consist of four parts:

1. **A summary of the film.** This should be a short (1/2 page to a page) description of the film's story. This is just a simple description and shouldn't dominate the paper. (10 Points)
2. **Analysis of a historical subject.** Before we watch each movie, you are given two or three themes to follow. It is recommended that you take notes on each of themes. In your paper, you should discuss with some detail the ways the film deals with that subject. Your paper should show how the film has enhanced your understanding of that historical subject. (20 points)
 - This part should really be the bulk of the paper. The point of the class is to learn about history by watching movies. This paper is an opportunity to prove to me you've done that. In a standard three page paper, a page to a page and a half should be dedicated to this part.
3. **Historical evaluation.** Some of these films are better sources for history than others. Which parts are reliable and accurate? What did the film show incorrectly? Your paper should include a discussion of things the film got both right and wrong. (10 points)
 - Remember that this is not a list of factual inaccuracies, but rather a general assessment of the film's value as a historical resource. Something like "while the movie Gandhi is filled with many factual errors and serious omissions, it does a good job portraying the spirit of nonviolence in the Indian Independence movement." Then use specific evidence from the film as evidence. Also, **cite your sources.** I don't expect that you know enough about the Roman Empire to tell me where Gladiator got it wrong. You will do research for this. Give credit where credit is due.
4. **Evaluation.** Why do you think the film presented the information the way it did? Was there a purpose to how the film was created? Your paper should end with a discussion of why or why didn't you like the film explained. (10 points)

Paper #2: Thematic Exploration Project

50 pts

Part I: Analysis of a Historical Theme

Pick any theme you want to follow. For example, you may choose

- Opportunities for (or treatment of) women in society
- Religious conflict
- Conflict within societies
- Conflict between societies
- Nationalism
- The push for Liberty
- Anything else that makes sense to you.

Once you've selected a theme, trace that theme throughout time.

What issues have been fairly consistent throughout all the movies we've seen?

In what way does this issue seem to vary from one time period to another? One place to another?

The theme you've selected will determine the type of questions you may want to explore, but in the end you must **demonstrate an understanding of your theme throughout history.**

Part II: Discuss evidence from Multiple Cinematic sources

Your project must draw evidence from as many movies as possible. Not simply mention each movie, but involve a detailed demonstration of how the film reflects your issues' place in history.

You may group multiple films together if they show the same thing. (for example, *The Battle of Algiers*, *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*, and *And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself* all demonstrate the use of violence aimed at overthrowing an "unacceptable" government.)

Understanding that some themes will be addressed in more movies than other themes, you should use as many as possible. If fewer movies work for you, I'd expect to see deeper exploration of those few movies.

_____/15

Part III: Overall quality of the project

This is the trickier part, since you all are going in different directions. Your project should reflect great care and effort. Regardless of your style of project, most people can agree on some basic definitions of quality. A paper that clearly has never been proofread or even "spell-checked" is probably a low quality paper. A poster that is colorful, detailed, and well-decorated is clearly better than some black and white scribbles on a crumpled piece of paper. This part of the grade must be rather subjective, I'm afraid. It will be determined by my opinion of the quality as well as a rough comparison between your project and others similar to it. (for example, if everybody else who writes a paper writes five detailed pages and you write one general page, you probably won't earn as many points as they will)

_____/15

Project Grade

_____/50

3. Participation Rubric.

You may earn up to 4 points for each day of the movie. Points will be distributed as follows.

4 points. You were clearly attentive for the entire film. You actively participated in the discussion that followed, either by asking for clarification on things you didn't understand, or by offering useful insights on the historical usefulness or reliability of the film.

3 points. You were clearly attentive for the entire film. Your participation in the discussion is minimal, or not useful to the group. ("He was pretty hot" might be a comment, but it isn't a particularly useful one)

2 points. Your attention wavers from time to time, and/or your participation is virtually non-existent.

0 or 1 point. You spend your time sleeping, reading, talking, etc.

In the event that you are absent, you may still earn the points. To receive credit, you must submit a written summary (1/2 page to a page) that shows me that you are caught up on the parts of the movie you missed. I don't care how you catch up. Rent the movie, ask a friend, read about it online, or anything else that works.

In order to earn the points, you must turn this in UPON YOUR RETURN!!!! Watching day 1, missing day 2, coming back for the ending, and then finding out what happened in the middle a couple of days later makes little sense.