

COM 493--Cleveland and Film Seminar

Assignment: Analysis of Film Festival Films

Due: April 11

Worth: A maximum of 60 pts. (30% of your course grade)

Your write-up for this assignment must be typed, double-spaced, and not exceed eight pages in length.

For this assignment, you need to analyze the three films you viewed at the Cleveland International Film Festival. The three films should constitute some fairly coherent area of film study, and with that in mind I have selected one reading for each approved “area” you might be studying (see end of this handout).

Given that a primary goal of the Festival itself is to bring to the Cleveland-area audience films that they might not otherwise see. . . for example, films that represent some cutting edge, that are emblematic of a particular film movement, or that represent a unique cultural perspective. . . it seems appropriate to try to analyze how certain Festival films “**fit**” or **do not fit** conventional scholarly wisdom about the form. Keep this basic goal in mind as you construct your analysis.

More specifically, apply concepts from your reading to the three films. Do the films you saw extend the model for their film type? How do they expand our understanding of this type of film in terms of substance? In terms of form (i.e., production techniques such as shots, editing)? What surprises are there? What discoveries? On the other hand, what aspects are exactly as you would expect from such films? Be creative, and please feel free go beyond these questions.

Your analyses will vary a bit depending on whether the reading is very specific (e.g., the de Wied article on suspense) or a more general, historical piece (e.g., most chapters from the Levy book). Again, simply extract key concepts (and trends) from the reading, and discuss them as applied to the three films.

As we discussed in class, you may choose to write about each of your three films in turn, or develop an “integrated” analysis that interweaves references to the films throughout, focusing on a series of concepts in turn.

I’m open to many types of structures and approaches to this assignment, so long as you do NOT do the following:

DO NOT write lengthy plot synopses. A few sentences per film is the most I want to see.

DO NOT write a movie review, emphasizing your own personal preferences.

SAVE both of these approaches for the “Imaging Cleveland” assignment, in which you’ll watch two films shot in the Cleveland area. More on that later.

Readings for analyses of Cleveland International Film Festival films (see Dr. N. for copies):

- a. Thrillers/Suspense:
de Wied, M. (1995). The role of temporal expanctancies in the production of film suspense and emotions watching movies. Poetics, 23, 107-123.
- b. Documentaries:
Chapter 9 ("Documentary") from: Giannetti, L. (1987). Understanding movies (4th ed.), Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- c. American Independents:
Introduction and Chapter 1 ("The New American Independent Cinema") from: Levy, E. (1999). Cinema of outsiders: The rise of American independent film. New York: New York University Press.
- d. Ten Percent Cinema:
Chapter 12 ("The New Gay and Lesbian Cinema") from: Levy, E. (1999). Cinema of outsiders: The rise of American independent film. New York: New York University Press.
- e. New German Cinema:
Selected sections (see Dr. N.) from: Corrigan, T. (1994). New German cinema: The displaced image (rev. ed.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- f. Outsiders:
Chapter 2 ("Cinema of Outsiders") from: Levy, E. (1999). Cinema of outsiders: The rise of American independent film. New York: New York University Press.
- g. Women and Film:
Chapter 10 ("Female/Feminist Sensibility") from: Levy, E. (1999). Cinema of outsiders: The rise of American independent film. New York: New York University Press.
- h. Mental Health:
Chapter 1 ("Typology, Mythology, Ideology") from: Gabbard, K., & Gabbard, G. O. (1987). Psychiatry and the cinema. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.