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Textual Analysis

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Textual Analysis

Cynara M. Medina, Ph.D.,

Textual analysis is a very common method of media interpretation. According to Alan McKee, the goal of a textual analysis is to "make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of a text" (McKee, 2003, p. 1). That said, textual analysis is a craft, and like any craft, it requires practice. This assignment's is meant to hone your abilities as an analyst, and to help you become a critic by sharing your critiques. You will produce one analysis during the semester.

Assignment guidelines:

Your analysis will be based on a film or television series of your choosing. It should draw upon theories studied in this class, as well as textual analysis techniques outlined by McKee.

Turning it in:

You will create a multi-page website, where you combine audiovisual resources and hyperlinks to enhance the analysis. Googlesites is recommended, but you can also use any other platform, such as tumblr, wordpress, or blogger, as long as you are comfortable with it. However, if you go outside the Trinity's googlesites domain, you should understand how doing so affects your privacy rights. **On Trinity's Googlesites, you can restrict how you share your content, but this will not necessarily be the case on other platforms.**

Specific requirements:

Writing mechanics:

1. The paper includes an introduction, a thesis statement, and a conclusion.
2. The paper contains no more than three (3) spelling and/or grammatical mistakes.
3. Each paragraph is organized around a guiding idea, and you use transitions to move smoothly between paragraphs and/or sections.

Content:

1. You begin with a clear question that will be addressed by analyzing the text.
2. You explain the social context of the text
3. You address the ideological assumptions of the text that have a close bearing on the question.
4. You make at least two *specific* connections to a theory explored in this class
5. You bring in at least five (5) sources to enhance your understanding, provide theoretical perspective, and/or support your claims about the text. You can use wikis as source, but if you do so, you must provide two additional sources that corroborate the wiki. Include at least two academic sources. Videos, audioclips, graphics, diagrams, etc are considered sources.
6. You analyze at least one trope used in the text, and offer what you believe would be its most likely interpretation.
7. You address issues of cinematic technique, and explain how they shape the ways in which the text could be understood.

Documentation:

1. All sources, including multimedia, are cited according in APA style.

Design:

1. Your work combines text and multimedia elements, such as video, audio, and/or hyperlinks. You use these elements to enhance your analysis, but they should never replace the analysis itself.
2. You apply at least ONE basic graphic design principle (e.g: contrast and affinity, use of color, repetition, alignment, etc.).

Grading:

Criteria	Novice (F-D)	Apprentice (C)	Proficient (B)	Expert (A)
Amount of information	One or more topics are not addressed. Writer provides few details about each topic.	Most topics are addressed. Author provides at least three details about each topic.	All topics are addressed. Author provides several details about each topic.	All topics are addressed. Author provides many details about each topic. These details are unique and interesting, and represent the author's own reflection and/or interpretation of source material.
Quality	The author presents more opinion than fact. The information comes from unreliable sources. There sources do not enhance the analysis.	The writing is a combination of fact and opinion from reliable and unreliable sources. Most sources do not enhance the analysis.	The author uses reliable sources to draw information. Most of this information is quoted directly. Most of the sources enhance the analysis.	The author paraphrases and/or summarizes information from reliable sources, and uses it effectively to support broader arguments about the text.

Presentation and organization	The work as a whole lacks structure and organization. Paragraphs appear unrelated and/or are poorly constructed. As a result, the author's ideas are hard to understand.	The work is organized, but paragraphs are not well constructed.	The information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs	The information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs, headings, and sub-headings.
Mechanics	Many grammatical, spelling, and/or punctuation errors	A few grammatical, spelling, and/or punctuation errors	Almost no grammatical, spelling, and/or punctuation errors	No grammatical, spelling, and/or punctuation errors.
Sources	Sources are not cited, or are cited incorrectly	Most sources are cited.	All sources are cited, and the author uses a consistent style	All sources are cited in APA style.

Design

Design/Multimedia use	The author does not apply basic design principles (e.g., contrast and affinity, alignment, repetition, etc). No use of multimedia	The author's use of basic design principles minimally enhances the presentation and organization of the work. Multi-media is used ineffectively (e.g., it is unrelated to the author's argument)	The author's use of basic design principles enhances attractiveness and helps organize the presentation of the work. Multi-media is used effectively to enhance the analysis.
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