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For this project, you will create a 5min video essay about one stylistic element in a film, e.g. editing, camerawork, staging, sound, lighting, costume design, narrative structure, genre, etc. You will create a draft, submit it for peer review, revise it, and share the final version on our Vimeo channel.

- You should probably choose a stylistic element within these broader categories; e.g. in editing, the jump cut; in camerawork, the long take; in sound, the absence of non-diegetic sound. This leads to a more focused analysis than a general discussion of editing.
- If you feel up to it, you can do additional reading on the stylistic element of your choice. Attached is a chapter from David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's *Film Art: An Introduction* that covers mise-en-scene (specifically, setting, costume and make-up, lighting, staging, acting/performance, screen space, time, i.e. what we see and for how long).

Your video essay should incorporate elements of videographic criticism and use them in a thoughtful and creative way. For a video essay, it is not only important what you say, but how you say it. This requires some planning; in other words, you cannot expect to do well on this assignment if you start it two days before it's due. See tips listed below on how to get started.

As we discussed, videographic criticism uses editing modes that range from the poetic to the explanatory. The poetic mode relies on associations and juxtapositions between images or images and music to evoke a reaction in the viewer whereas the explanatory mode relies on voice-over and on-screen text to guide the viewer's reaction in how to interpret the media texts discussed in the video essay. In other words, the poetic mode leaves more room for the viewer to draw their own conclusions whereas the explanatory mode often clearly states an argument and walks viewers through an analysis of a film. One challenge of this assignment is to figure out how to clearly convey an insight into film style (using the explanatory mode) while also allowing images to speak for themselves (using the poetic mode).

Tips on how to get started:

How to start your video essay:

Title!

Introduce your sources

Introduce your argument

Voiceover:

- *Documentary-style*: formal; most direct way to guide viewer's interpretation/spell argument out clearly
- *Storytelling-style*: informal; leaves room for ambiguity while also guiding the viewer's interpretation

Comparisons:

- Split- or multi-screen

- Repetition (useful to show tropes, especially across texts)
- Overlay

Music (best examples: fan vids):

- *With lyrics*: lyrics serve as lens to interpret images; consider juxtaposition rather than illustration; make sure at least some of the lyrics are easy to understand
- *Without lyrics*: enhances mood or affect of the images (music can align with the mood of the images or serve as contrast)
- Editing on the beat

On-screen text:

Quotes: pause flow of images or not? Separate title card or not? One block of text or broken up?

- Patrick's [exercise](#)
- Michael's [exercise](#)
- ➔ These are examples of quotes that do more than provide information; they are also a visual argument.

Intertitles to mark off sections of your essay

Highlight important words/phrases of the dialogue by using bold/different font or colors

Other media sources:

- Still images
- Screenshots
- Behind-the-scenes footage
- Interviews