

It is fairly commonly accepted in the 21st Century that film is art. However, no art work exists in a vacuum. Every work has an origin point, a context that helps to shape what it is. In many ways, film is more sensitive to this context and culture than many other art forms. Film is popular art, and film is intended to make money. So...all the history and changes that we've talked about over the past few weeks are very relevant to understanding the films that you've watched. Film has grown, changed, and stretched over the years since its beginnings. On this test, I'm asking you to tie together the history of culture and the film industry that we've talked about in class with one of the films you watched. I chose each these films for a reason. Each one ties in some way to its cultural context and the state of the film industry. What I want you to do for this test is the following:

1. Pick ONE of the movies that you watched in the HISTORY section of this class. It can be either an assigned or option film from the list.
2. Consider the year(s) in which it was produced/released. Go back; remember what the film industry was doing at the time; remember what culture was doing at the time. If you can't remember, look it up.
3. Look for connections between the culture/film industry and the film you're watching
4. Answer the following 4 questions:
 - **How does this movie "fit" in its time period?**
 - **Are there elements in the film that you see as a direct expression of the film industry in the decade it was made?**
 - **What specific elements of the film (sound, theme, subject, shots, sequences) tie it to its time period?**
 - What do those elements *mean* (I'm trying to prevent you from telling me, "Lord of the Rings is recent 'cause it has kickin' special effects that that they couldn't do in that old-time crap." That is NOT the kind of thing I'm looking for. I want you to tell me what the larger reliance on special effects tells you about the culture and the film industry)
 - **What about this movie do YOU think hit a nerve in its time? Why is it exceptional? Why did I put it on the list for this class?**
 - I told you on the first day of class that the movies I chose were not necessarily movies that I liked. I chose these films because of critical acclaim and because they have won awards in their industry. What about the film do you think spoke to you and to audiences of its time?
 - This question is one of opinion, but it should be well thought through, logically supported opinion. Most critics feel that films are successful because they speak to 2 things: the needs of a particular culture/time and the essential

nature of human beings. What I'm looking for here is for you to touch on both of those elements. What is it about THIS film that made it great and makes it enduring? OR what is it that failed to make it popular in its time but has made it enduring?

You may answer these questions one at a time, or you may combine them all into a single, complete answer. How you do them is up to you, but I *am* going to be exacting in grading. The questions here are asking you to mentally draw connections between film and context. This is tough stuff, but I have faith in you guys. Think well. Write well. This is 50% of this test grade. Oh, and a 1 sentence answer isn't going to get you a great grade (just so we're clear). ☺

Please, please, feel free to email me if you're confused about the test, if you need a little push in the right direction or if you're going to be late in turning it in...that's what I'm here for!