

How to analyze a film

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



How To Analyze a Film As you might guess, conducting a semiotic analysis of a film is a somewhat more complicated venture than conducting a semiotic analysis of a print advertisement. This is not to say, of course, that movies and advertisements do not share similarities. Both, for example, are "texts" that rely on visual imagery to tell specific stories, and both are in the business of promoting specific ideologies. At the same time, print advertisements are limited by the static nature of their medium.

Film, on the other hand, is not a static medium, and thus its stories are much more complex. Analyzing a film, then, as our text relates, is much more like "reading a novel" (307). In short, analyzing a film requires you to take a careful look at the setting, plot, characters, dialogue, symbols, metaphors, archetypes, etc. , as well as those factors that have an influence on the film, such as the social, historical, and political context in which the film was created. STEPS FOR CONDUCTING A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF A FILM

Despite the differences between movies and advertisements, the goal of a semiotic analysis of a film is nonetheless the same as a semiotic analysis of an advertisement, namely to determine its current social significance. With that in mind, here is an expanded and modified version of the steps for conducting a semiotic analysis, tailored specifically to film: 1. Establish the sign (film) to be decoded 2. Set aside your opinion; your task is to analyze the current social significance (This assignment is NOT a review of the film!!) 3. Determine what the sign means (analysis of setting, plot, characters, symbols, etc.) 4. Discuss how the film represents its topic 5. Sketch the overall context (historical, cultural, and political) in which the sign appears 6. Develop a list of questions, concerns, and/or issues that will guide your

analysis 7. Develop a thesis statement Again, this is NOT the order in which everything should appear in your paper. This is merely a step by step of how to PREPARE to write a film analysis.

It would also be helpful to find other important films in same genre of your chosen film and see HOW your film is different, and WHY that difference is important. ASSIGNMENT Using the steps for conducting a semiotic analysis of a film outlined above as the foundation for your argument, write a three to four page analysis of your chosen film. Preparation for this assignment requires the following: 1.) Locating, renting, and watching the film 2.) Going through the steps for conducting a semiotic analysis of a film as outlined above

After completing the steps, your paper should include the following: 1. A thesis statement 2. A short but detailed description of the film 3. An analysis of the film that includes some of the details/discoveries that you made while completing the steps (NOTE: You may NOT use first person pronouns in this essay-“ I”, “ me”, “ my”, etc.) 4. A title page 5. At least two reviews of the film quoted and cited properly 6. Works Cited/References Page