

RHCS 105: Media, Culture, and Identity
Spring 2016

Short Essay 1

Due Thursday, February 4

100 points or 10% of final grade

Submitted via Blackboard prior to class

Assignment Description:

Since the release of Banksy's documentary *Exit Through the Gift Shop* in 2010, critics have debated the extent to which the film is a genuine documentary or what is commonly referred to as a "mockumentary" (a fake documentary). Regardless of one's stance with respect to this question, the film raises several big, important (read: difficult to answer) questions. These questions are touched upon in the film, as you know, through the tracking of the street art phenomenon and the rise of Mr. Brainwash.

As a respected media critic, you have been tasked with writing a review of *Exit Through the Gift Shop* for a media studies journal, *Media Teacher*. The purpose of the journal is to review popular texts that media studies professors might use in the classroom. In your review of 2-3 typed pages, you are expected to discuss whether you would recommend the film to media studies professors. In addition to offering your recommendation regarding the film's value, your review *must*:

1. Provide a brief (approximately paragraph-long) summary of the film. Don't worry about spoilers. The audience won't mind.
2. Discuss the central themes of the film as they relate to media studies. What questions does the film raise that might be especially important to media studies students? Does the film answer them? Explain. [Hint: you must use concepts from this course in your discussion. This includes readings from the textbook, supplemental readings, as well as class discussion/lecture.]
3. Explain why you have made the recommendation you have using details from the film and the course.

The review must include a properly formatted works cited list or bibliography following either APA or Chicago Manual of Style (in addition to the 2-3 typed pages). For guidance on these citation styles, see the link to the Library's Citing Sources guide on the Assignments page on the course blog (note: It is underneath the Campus Participation Assignment, so be sure to scroll down!).

Please note: this review requires that you consider the film's value to a media studies class. This review is *not* asking you to discuss whether you liked the film. Additionally, do not hold back. If you do not think the film has value for a media studies class, you can (and should) write that. I am *most* interested in how you make sense of the film within a media studies context. You are being graded on the quality of your analysis *not* whether you think the film has value or not.

The assignment will be graded out of 100 points. The assignment should be submitted **via Blackboard before class on Thursday, February 4** and adhere to the following format:

- Typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman Font (or equivalent)
- Double spaced
- Include page numbers

- Pledged [Write “I pledge” either at the top or at the very end of your paper.]
- A title that is creative (and not “Paper 1”)
- “Normal” margins (approximately 1 – 1.1 inches)

Students can access *Exit Through the Gift Shop* in one of two ways. First, a streaming link is available to all students via the course Blackboard site. See the Blackboard tab: Movie Links & Show Times. Additionally, students may access the film via Netflix streaming, if they have a subscriptions.

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Student Name: _____

Short Paper 1 Evaluation

| <u>Grade</u> | <u>Guidelines</u> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “A” range or 90-100 points | Review is conceptually sophisticated, engaged in a substantive way with course material, considering film’s value to a media studies course; Thought-provoking; Review draws upon material to make a point that extends beyond the material; Review presents a succinct summary of the film and does not rely too heavily on summary; Clear, easy to read style; Includes properly formatted works cited list/bibliography as well as in-text citations/footnotes where relevant. |
| “B” range or 80-89 points | Review clearly presents student’s interpretation and is engaged with course material; Makes solid points; Incorporates class material and makes connections but may lack development; Review may rely too heavily on summary without integrating analysis; Organized and well edited; Includes works cited list/bibliography as well as in-text citations/footnotes, however, may include some errors in style. |
| “C” range or 70-79 points | Review reflects superficial engagement with material; Makes shallow contribution to conversation by focusing largely on whether the student liked the film; May not answer all 3 component parts of assignment; Some typos; Review is overly general, seizing personal experience; If works cited list/bibliography is included, it consists of multiple significant errors. |
| “D” range or 60-69 points | Review is irrelevant to topic; Unclear, disorganized, and tangential to assignment guidelines; Misuses course materials; Review relies on clichés and generalities; Includes typos; Does not include works cited list/bibliography nor does it include in-text citations/footnotes where appropriate. |
| “F” range or 59 and below points | Review is irrelevant to topic; Makes no attempt to draw upon course materials; Review relies on generalities; Review is confusing and unedited; Does not include works cite list/bibliography nor does it include appropriate in-text citations or footnotes. |