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First Assignment Prompt: SEGMENTATION and ANALYSIS OF NARRATION

Due: Friday, April 21st @ 2:00 p.m. (hard copy only; no exceptions) in FMSO

Length: 7-8 pages (with numbered pages): 1-inch margins, 12-point Times or Times New Roman only

\*\*\*Please note: You will be required to attach your graded 1st assignment to your 2nd assignment.

SUMMARY: This assignment involves examining the assignment film using *both* description and analysis. The aim is to enable you to demonstrate your careful understanding of how to construct a plot segmentation, how to use specific and appropriate film studies terms, and how to use and analyze the assignment film's patterns of narration. The first assignment provides important preparation for the next assignment, which will be a thesis-driven essay about the assignment film's narration, and how it selects and combines elements from the fabula (story) and presents them via the syuzhet (plot). Remember: Very simply, a film's narration concerns the *process of turning the story into the plot*.

Requirements:

The first assignment has 2 major parts:

- 1 • A plot segmentation
  - 2 • Analysis of one pattern of narration
- (We'll save interpretation of the film text for the second assignment.)

\*Note: You must complete both parts of the assignment to receive credit.

(1) PLOT SEGMENTATION (5 pages in length):

The focus of this part of the assignment concerns accurate and succinct description. Consult the sample plot segmentations for *The Wizard of Oz* and *Citizen Kane* (posted on the course website), and use them as general guides for the construction of your own segmentation for the assignment film. Preparing the segmentation enables you to analyze a film's patterns of development because it consists of a written outline that breaks the film into its major and minor parts, with the parts marked by consecutive numbers or letters. If a film has 40 scenes, you can label each scene with a number running from 1 to 40. Then, you can divide some parts further and annotate them with details about the relevant stylistic/technical strategies. Segmenting a film in this way also enables you to find similarities, patterns, and differences among the film's parts and to trace the overall progression of the film's narration (and its stylistic details).

- Prepare your segmentation in outline form with complete sentences.
- Note: Do not use the DVD's chapter titles as entries on your outline (DVD's chapters often do not correspond to individual scenes).

(2) ANALYSIS should include the following (2-3 pages in length):

This portion of the assignment will be reflected in your plot segmentation as well as in a separate two-to-three-page section of your assignment labeled "Analysis."

Identify and describe one substantial pattern of narration that the film develops and that you believe is especially productive for understanding the relationship between the syuzhet (plot) and the fabula (story).

\*On your plot segmentation, annotate and/or offer a more detailed description of the key details of the pattern of narration.

Then, in the "Analysis" section, explain the development of the pattern—how it's introduced and how it develops over the course of the film. That is, consider the similarities and differences among the sequences that feature the pattern of narration. Explain why you think the pattern is significant on both a local and a global level. In other words, explain the usefulness of the pattern you've identified and analyzed. You may include brief attention to stylistic pattern/s, but be careful—your primary focus should be upon the work of the film's narration, so if you discuss style it should also be in relation to the assignment film's process of narration.

In the "Analysis" section, aim to provide a succinct, specific description of the significant pattern of narration that you have selected using appropriate and precise film studies terms and appropriate terms/concepts related to narration.

Finally, include a title for your assignment (though you can revise it for the second assignment).



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