Documentary Rhetorical Analysis Film Review

(215 POINTS)

AP Language and Composition

Mr. Eble

**Your Assignment:** You will analyze the rhetoric of a documentary film, specifically its purpose, audience, persuasive appeals, and its effectiveness. Essentially, you are analyzing the filmmaker’s argument, how he or she develops it, and the extent to which he or she is successful in achieving the purpose. A major part of your grade on this essay will be your understanding of how the filmmaker presents his or her case, I.E. through statistics, expert testimony, personal experience, humor, archival footage, soundtrack.

Put more simply, you will write a **film review** in a publication of your choice—the Moeller *Crusader*, the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, the *New York Times*—in which you rhetorically analyze the film with researched comments from other reviews to bolster your own analysis of the film’s rhetorical properties. On page two, you’ll find a list of films from which you may choose, organized by topic.

**Note Well:**

* Cite all sources that you use.
* Because you’re writing to convince, you may / should use your own experience of watching the documentary as a means of persuasion. Thus, you may use first-person pronouns.
* Don’t forget to complete the post-writing analysis / evaluation

Of course, we’ll do some peer review to help you.

For your post-writing reflection, you’ll write about the following questions:

* With what part of this assignment did I struggle? Which parts gave me problems?
* What changes did I make to my review? Why did I make them?
* How did I adjust my message to my specific audience? (Moeller students, the readership of your publication… this will depend upon the publication you choose…and you’ll have to do research to learn about your publication’s readership).

**Rubric for Assessment:** Documentary Film Rhetorical Review

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|  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Thesis | Essay demonstrates an explicit, clear thesis with an arguable / debatable alternative; thesis is fully developed throughout paper | Essay demonstrates a thesis that is somewhat developed throughout the paper. | Essay demonstrates a thesis that is not fully developed throughout the paper. | Essay fails to demonstrate a thesis ; essay’s “thesis” is a summary or statement of fact |
| Unity, Logic, Coherence | Essay’s organization is logical, clear, and easy to follow, making use of transitional words and phrases that make the text flow well. The writing is concise, avoids redundancy, and remains relevant to the main point being expressed. | Essay’s organization is generally logical, clear, and easy to follow, but contains some repetitions and redundancies or drifts from the main point being expressed. | Essay’s organization is basically okay, but contains some faulty logic, redundancies or digressions that take away from the main point being expressed. | Essay is difficult to follow due to lack of unity, coherence, or use of fuzzy logic. |
| Evidence of Understanding:  Language of Film & Rhetoric | Essay demonstrates superior understanding of the language of film and rhetorical analysis. Analysis, evaluation is amply supported with examples from the film & the language of film & rhetoric while avoiding summary (three or more supports per paragraph). | Essay demonstrates understanding of the subject matter. Analysis, evaluation is supported with examples from the film, the language of film & rhetoric while avoiding summary. | Essay is short on the use of details and examples, or the essay demonstrates little understanding of the subject matter. | Essay does not adequately demonstrate understanding of the text and subject matter, or it does not support the thesis with details, reasons, and examples. |
| Audience Connection | Essay shows a concentrated effort to connect the selected audience to the film via a relative opening, selection of details relevant to the audience (including own ethos), an evaluative closing that provides a value statement of the film’s worthiness for the audience | Essay shows some attempt at connection with the audience via the opening, selection of details relevant to the audience, and a closing evaluative statement | Essay shows little attempt at connection with the audience via the various elements, as author provides general analysis / evaluation. | Essay demonstrates no attention to appealing to the audience via the various elements. |
| SMUGGS | Essay avoids wordiness, and redundancy. Demonstrates accuracy in the use of the literary present tense, grammar, word usage, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. | Essay contains some minor errors in punctuation, spelling, or grammar, or some minor slips in maintaining consistency in tense or person, but essay is still credible. | Essay includes many minor errors in punctuation, spelling, word usage, style, or grammar that affect the readability of the essay. | Essay includes careless spelling or grammatical errors, awkward language, or other mechanical errors that discredit the writer. |

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| 20 = 100 | 19= 96 | 18=92 | 17=88 | 16=84 | 15=80 |
| 14=76 | 13=72 | 12=70 | 11 or below=69 |

**Comments:**