

RLG101H FILM PARAGRAPH – INSTRUCTIONS

Submission

- The deadline to submit this assignment is 11:59 pm on **January 26**. Your assignment will be penalized one mark (out of 20) per day late.
- You must submit your assignment to both BLACKBOARD **and** TURNITIN.COM as a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) file. The version of your assignment on Turnitin.com will be the one graded. Paper copies will not be accepted. If you do not wish to submit your work to Turnitin.com, you must consult with the course instructor; for details see the course website: <https://rlg101h.wordpress.com/grading/writing-assignments>

Purpose

The main goal of this assignment is to demonstrate that theories of religion can be used to interpret phenomena that are often not understood or seen as “religious.” Also, we are asking you to submit just one paragraph at this stage so that you can receive detailed feedback on it, which will help you improve the work you produce for the full version of the film analysis assignment.

Assignment

Your task is to write a single paragraph analyzing a “non-religious” film using one of the following theories from chapter 5 of Nye’s *Religion: The Basics*:

- Reductionism (p. 108–9)
- Cognitive vs. affective beliefs (p. 117)
- Habitus (p. 124–6)^[1]_{SEP}

It is crucial that you choose a theory from the above list. **If you use a different theory for this assignment, you may be penalized up to 10 marks (out of 20).**

Your analysis must show that, when the film is looked at using the theory you have chosen, it can be seen to promote a particular message. By “message” I mean that the film is trying to tell us something important that is applicable to our own lives outside of the film: an insight into people; a philosophy about life; a way in which we should act; etc.

Please keep in mind that any given film will likely have several different messages. Some of these may even contradict one another. Your job in this paragraph will be to use a theory about belief to lead your reader through the film and demonstrate how one of the messages you have uncovered is expressed.

Film selection

Each TA has made a list of films for you, which are posted on the course website. **You must select one film from your TA’s list.** If you write on a different film (e.g., from another TA’s list) you may be **penalized up to 10 marks** (out of 20). Also, you are responsible for tracking down a copy of the film to watch for your assignment. We will not be providing any of the films for you.

The films on the list from which you will choose are “non-religious” in the sense that they are not overtly or primarily about a particular religion. The list does not include, for example, such movies as *Little Buddha* or *The Passion of the Christ*.

Audience

Assume that your audience has seen the film, but that they do not know anything about the academic study of religion. This means that you should NOT provide a plot summary of the movie, but you DO need to clearly explain the theory you are using to analyze the film.

Writing about film

Your assignment must follow standard academic practice for writing about film:

- The film title must appear in *italics*. For example: *The Lion King*.
- Always write in the **present tense** when describing the action of a film. For example: “In the *Lion King*, Simba **disobeys** his father when he **travels** to the elephant graveyard.”
- Do NOT include the film in your **bibliography**, or attempt to use the Chicago Manual of Style to document your citations of the film. Simply quote from it, or refer to it, throughout your assignment without providing any source documentation.

No research

You are to do no additional research for this assignment beyond watching the film and using the specified course texts. Your analysis, in other words, must be based solely on your own observations of the film.

Format

Your assignment must:

- Be no longer than 300 words in length (not including bibliography or citations);
- Include a cover page based on the template below (replace the yellow highlighted portions with your own information);
- Be double-spaced and use Times 12-point font;
- Show page numbers in the top right corner of each page (page 1 comes *after* your title page);
- Include in-text citations to Nye’s text that conform to The Chicago Manual of Style (author-date format);
- Include a bibliography that conforms to The Chicago Manual of Style (author-date format), and that appears after the film analysis paragraph;
- Include a copy of the grading rubric for this assignment (available on Blackboard); this must appear on a separate page after your bibliography;

NOTE: If your assignment does not meet these formatting requirements, specific grade deductions will be applied. These deductions will be listed on the grading rubric.

Commented [KD1]: Explain that this refers to the in-text citations, NOT to actual quotes from the book

RLG101H
Introduction to the Study of Religion
Prof. Ken Derry
TA: Name

Title of Analysis (including *Film Title*)

By Your Name
Student Number

Date of Submission
Word Count