



Family in Film



Midterm Paper Tips!

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# STRUCTURE



- You do not need one main thesis that encapsulates all components required for the midterm!
  - Treat the varying components required as different questions that the midterm asks
- Use headers to structure your response
  - E.g. see example in next slide!



# STRUCTURE



## **Vanier Institute Functions of a Family Connection**

**\*\*2 paragraphs of HOW the family in the movie or episode you chose (2-4 paragraphs normally) fulfills TWO of the Vanier Institute FUNCTIONS of a family with detailed examples**

### **Theory**

**\*\*Explain the basics of the theory in your own words AND give and at least 2 detailed examples for how it applies to a scene/portion of the movie/episode**

### **Class & Race**

**\*\*explain them in relation to the family within the movie; each section would get about 2-4 paragraphs & include at least 4 connections total from class (i.e. specific terms, research, concepts, etc.) with explanations/definitions of your connections AND give detailed examples**

### **Connecting to my Family**

**\*\*discuss 2 similarities AND 2 differences between the family within the movie/TV episode and your own family (typically, this section would have 1-2 paragraphs for similarities and 1-2 paragraphs for differences)**



# PAPER QUALITY

## *Paragraph Structure*

- First sentence of a paragraph should organize the paragraph by summarizing the information in the paragraph (i.e. immediately state your point)
- Quotes should be used as evidence of your point
  - Cited correctly
  - Used effectively - critically evaluating to what extent does this prove the point you're making!! \*\*
    - Hit and run quotes = bad
    - See examples



# PAPER QUALITY

*E.g. Hit and run quote (ew not vibes)*

- Many leaders would want to kill the enemy that destroyed their homes and terrorized their people. "I risked my life often when I was young. Now I am old. But as a king of the people I shall pursue this fight for the glory of winning" (30). So he selfishly goes alone to fight the dragon

(Example Source)



# PAPER QUALITY

*E.g. Fully integrated quote (so slay!! But needs more evaluation)*

- Beowulf vows to kill the enemy that destroyed his home and terrorized his people. Although he has recently killed the monster Grendel with his bare hands, the elderly warrior realizes he is no longer in his prime. As he contemplates fighting the dragon, Beowulf laments, "I risked my life often when I was young. Now I am old. But as a king of the people I shall pursue this fight for the glory of winning" (30). Here is where we clearly see Beowulf committing mistakes. His motives for fighting are tragically flawed. He does not wish to strike down the monster to ensure the safety of his kingdom and people; ~~instead~~, he seeks fame, longing to recapture the glory of his youth. ~~So~~ he selfishly goes alone to fight the dragon.

# PAPER QUALITY

## A slay example (but I'm biased)

Within this pairing, Asian women are often represented as the exotic love interest for a white male protagonist (Espiritu, 2008; Jiwani, 1992; Thakore, 2013). For example, in the popular film *The Deceivers*:

Indian women are...confined to the realm of the 'exotic' and the dangerous. The white colonial officer...tries to save a young Indian woman from committing Sati. He pretends to be her husband and ensures that she catches a fleeting glimpse of him, so that in knowing that he is alive, she cannot commit herself to death. (Jiwani, 1992)

Here, consistent with colonial ideologies, a South Asian woman is depicted as an exotic object of desire for a white man. However, this image simultaneously subverts the historical truth that

British soldiers callously sexually assaulted South Asian women by portraying this young South Asian woman as *needing* a white man to save her. Thus, the representation in this film not only maintains the colonial notion that South Asian women are exotic objects for white men—but also reinforces white male supremacy by perpetuating the fallacious notion that colonizers *benefitted* the colonized population, which was crucial in justifying the imperialist project and constructing the hegemonic Western sex-gender-sexuality regime. This reflects how the media stabilizes the hegemonic Western sex-gender-sexuality regime by *strategically* reproducing certain aspects of racialized and gendered colonial relations to satisfy their white audiences.





# PAPER QUALITY

Theories are NOT facts. Theories are LENSES to understand phenomena!

- When discussing theories, remember that theories are lenses to view/understand the world, illuminating some things while disregarding others.
- Must recognize nuanced nature of theories
  - E.g. instead of saying "this scene shows X theory" "-reframe it as something like "when understanding this scene as **\*\*theoretical understanding\*\***, then this scene may be understood as Y."
  - Example on next slide



# PAPER QUALITY

To the benefit of those owning the means of production, compared to 30 years ago, the average American worker works more hours for reduced compensation—negatively impacting families. A Marxist lens illustrates how this reflects capitalist relations within a profit-driven capitalist culture whereby workers, the proletariat, are coerced into their exploitation by those owning the means of production, the bourgeoisie, due to a rapacious desire to maximize profit.

Workism and #hustle culture are exploitative tools utilized by those owning the means of production (e.g. Elon Musk) to generate increased surplus labour. Perpetuated by these tools is the notion that spending more time at work is a means of "proving" one's masculinity. The precariousness of masculinity is used by the bourgeoisie to coerce the proletariat into working more hours—effectively benefitting the bourgeoisie. Thus, we see the exploitative relationship, shaped by relations to the means of production, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.



(a 250-word max response I wrote in 1st year, pls don't judge too harshly lol - but this is an example of how you're expected to engage with your chosen theory, within the context of the film ofc & w/ more detail to substantiate analysis)

Illuminated within this article, one cannot simply leave their job, especially within a precarious labour market. To the benefit of the bourgeoisie, employment is necessary to access necessities such as food and shelter. Further reflected in this article, therefore, is the aforementioned hegemonic relationship between the two central classes within our capitalist society, built on relations to the principal means of production.

However, Marxism seems only to account for workers who make a wage. Elucidated throughout this article, though, the masculine structure of the workplace, in which capitalism thrives, is dependent on unpaid labour—primarily done by women. Thus, though the work of Marx is significant in aiding our understanding of the exploitative relationship between those who sell their labour power for a wage and the bourgeoisie—it seems somewhat limited in its ability to account for the role of unpaid labour and how this shapes capitalist relations.

# PAPER QUALITY

AVOID deterministic phrases! (i.e. the idea that something causes/determines something else)

- Deterministic approaches seek to explain. To do this they must simplify or leave out some complexity.
- HOWEVER, few social phenomena have singular causes
  - Theories that make large arguments must summon large amounts of evidence to support such claims.



# PAPER QUALITY

AVOID overgeneralizations (e.g. if I have seen only one swan and it was white, saying "all swans are white")

- Generalizations beg the questions 'How do you know that?' 'That is interesting, but is that true/significant/born out by the evidence?' and 'Why is that the case?'
- As social scientists a large part of our job (this includes us as students of sociology) is actually to problematize these generalizations



# PAPER QUALITY

AVOID vagueness. Instead, be precise!

- You cannot always assume the reader shares the same knowledge and agrees with you.

Example (source):

<b>Vague</b>	Today's horror movies are too graphic, <u>and</u> people have serious objections to them.
<b>Precise</b>	Horror movies have desensitized American viewers to violence <u>because</u> current cinematic techniques result in more graphic content.



# PAPER QUALITY

Orwell's 6 rules for writing (source)

- Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
- Never use a long word where a short one will do.
- If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
- **Never use the passive where you can use the active.**
- Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
- Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- Grammarly
  - Not only does Grammarly fix errors, but it also helps you enhance the clarity and readability of your writing
- UBC Center for Writing and Scholarly Communication
  - Free!
  - All Graduate Writing Consultants are trained in providing the same pedagogically-informed feedback derived from detailed research in the field of writing studies
- Me along with the rest of the teaching team! Come to office hours!

Good luck! :)))

