

PHI315 Paper II Prompt | Today: Oct 6; Due: Oct 15

Today is a paper workshop day, meaning that I am going to explain what I want in the paper and let you both ask me questions, work with each other, and in general brainstorm how you will tackle accomplishing the assignment. It is my hope that you feel comfortable enough to ask my questions, to work with each other, and that you find this assignment both interesting and personally fulfilling.

To begin with, let us look at the description of the paper assignment as it appears in your syllabus:

Paper II: The second paper presents the layout for all the subsequent papers. Paper II is in relation to the content we cover during our AI and AL sections. You will write a paper where you address some philosophical issue covered during the lectures and discussion in relation to one media item we covered. You will also include some other student's comment from your class session reflections and respond to it or amplify it in agreement. (18% of your final grade, due end of day October 15).

So, then, let us break down what this assignment means. I want you to produce an original piece of analysis in relation to artificial intelligence and artificial life. Specifically, I want you to pick a philosophical issue in one of the movies that we covered and then analyze it using the method that we covered in the first few weeks of class on creativity. So, the approach is to look at the piece of fiction in question, see how it expands your horizons in relation to some issue, and then philosophically bring that issue down into everyday life, and see what wisdom, in relation to practical action and theoretical thought, you can get from it. Additionally, and this is crucial, you have to engage with the comments your peers made as a creative contribution—you have to take their comment, and then respond to it, since they contributed to your comprehension of the material. Today is your chance to talk to your peers further to clarify potential comments they have made, you can do so outside of class as well.

Here is an example. Suppose you want to address *Her* as your chosen media item, and in terms of the issue, you want to address the notion of artificially intelligent and alive entities having the capacity to feel emotions. You would write the paper such that it has the following structure:

Introduction: here you present the general idea you wish to discuss, and the thesis you have. Something like—"The film *Her* presents an artificially intelligent and alive personal assistant named Samantha who seems to exhibit behavior that we might characterize as emotional...Commonly, we do not think of AI systems as being capable of feeling emotion, but the film forces us to consider it as a possibility...Bringing this creative insight into our present conditions, I think

that the advancing behaviors of the various LLMs are such that we may genuinely start having to treat them as capable of emotional attachment...”

Section One: here you present your thoughts prior to the film, how you thought about the issue you are discussing. This need not be long—a couple paragraphs suffices.

Section Two: here you explain the movie, what happened, and so on. This should be detailed, but I do not want **JUST A SUMMARY** – I want a focused discussion of the **RELEVANT** part of the movie in relation to your idea.

Section Three: here you outline the discussion the movie led to, and here **YOU MUST ADDRESS THE INPUT OF AT LEAST ANOTHER STUDENT** since that is their creative contribution to your own comprehension. Cite the day that this comment obtained. I want you to respond to the person’s comment, either disagreeing in which case I want a criticism, or agreeing, in which case I want an amplification, by which I mean say why you agree.

Section Four: here you defend your thesis. Explain the philosophical insight you obtained from the film and discussion, and then apply it to the concrete real actual world, and what it might mean for us as we try to live good lives.

Conclusion: give an overview of what you wrote, and add sources, such as the movie and the day of the discussion.

This is of course a rough outline of what I expect—it can be different, as long as you cover all the requisite aspects of the above outline. Now, please ask me questions and also talk to each other about this assignment.